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Theological essays

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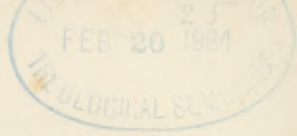












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Princeton

# THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS:

REPRINTED FROM THE

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PRINCETON REVIEW.

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## P R E F A C E .

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It is no more than justice to the conductors of the Princeton Review, to state distinctly, that the thought of this republication did not originate with them. For the selection of the articles, and the mode of their present appearance, neither they nor the respective authors have any responsibility.

For a number of years it has been impossible to make up complete sets of this periodical work ; and numerous orders for the earlier volumes remain unfulfilled. As, however, the demand for these discussions was manifestly increasing, it was judged suitable to make choice among the more valuable theological articles : the result is the volume now offered. This, it is confidently believed, will have a permanent value, as representing a class of doctrinal opinion which, not without conflict, is making wide and rapid progress in America. The topics here treated, by some of the ablest pens in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, are of great importance in theology. They involve the grave questions agitated between the Evangelical scheme, on one hand, and Infidels, Papists, Socinians, Pelagians, Arminians, and Enthusiasts, on the other. In reproducing, for the use of clergymen, theological students, and accomplished laymen, dissertations which have a polemical aspect, it is by no means intended to revive old controversies ; yet it is the persuasion of those who make this publication, that the value of the truths contended for cannot well be overrated.

The "Biblical Repertory" has now reached its twenty-second volume. It was commenced, at Princeton, in the year 1825, by Professor Hodge, to whose care and learning it has continued to owe much of its value and popularity. At the time of its inception, the plan did not extend much beyond the field of criticism and hermeneutics ; and it was largely

occupied with translations and reprints of biblical treatises, thus verifying both parts of its title. After three or four years, it began to assume more of the attributes of a theological and literary review, which character it has avowedly sustained for the last seventeen years.

To speak of the living contributors to this work might savour of indecorum ; nor have we authority to intrude upon the privacy of those respected men whose labours we use. Among the dead, we may record, as ornaments of this publication, by essays and reviews of great merit, the following honoured and beloved names:—The Reverend Dr. John H. Rice, the Reverend Dr. Fisk, the Reverend Dr. John Breckinridge, President Marsh, Professor Patton, the Reverend Mr. Winchester, and the Reverend Professor Dod. In regard to the writings of the eminent man last-mentioned, it is proper to say, that the publishers have been restrained from incorporating his valuable contributions into this volume, by the welcome information that a separate edition of his remains is in preparation.

Ample materials still remain for a similar volume, in case that which is now respectfully offered should meet with the patronage which is expected.

*New York, April 15, 1846.*

# CONTENTS.

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	<i>Page</i>
ESSAY    I.    The Rule of Faith . . . . .	1 -
—    II.    The Sonship of Christ . . . . .	27 -
—    III.    The Decrees of God . . . . .	60
—    IV.    The Early History of Pelagianism . . . . .	80
—    V.    Original Sin . . . . .	109
—    VI.    The Doctrine of Imputation . . . . .	128
—    VII.    The Doctrine of Imputation . . . . .	165
—    VIII.    The Doctrine of Imputation . . . . .	195
—    IX.    Melancthon on the Nature of Sin . . . . .	218
—    X.    Doctrines of the Early Socinians . . . . .	228
—    XI.    The Power of Contrary Choice . . . . .	250
—    XII.    The Inability of Sinners . . . . .	265
—    XIII.    The New Divinity Tried . . . . .	285
—    XIV.    Beman on the Atonement . . . . .	308
—    XV.    Sacerdotal Absolution . . . . .	352
—    XVI.    Regeneration . . . . .	367
—    XVII.    Sanctification . . . . .	405
—    XVIII.    Transubstantiation . . . . .	444
—    XIX.    Sunday Mails . . . . .	470
—    XX.    Bodily Effects of Religious Excitement . . . . .	510
—    XXI.    Tholuck's History of Theology . . . . .	524
—    XXII.    Transcendentalism . . . . .	608
—    XXIII.    Cause and Effect . . . . .	694





## ESSAY I.

# THE RULE OF FAITH.\*

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THE recent publication in England of so many works on Tradition indicates a new and extended interest in the subject; and their republication in America shows that the interest is as great here as it is in England. It is not difficult to account for this. The rapid increase of Romanism in some parts of the world, the revival of zeal and confidence among the Papists, and the advocacy of the leading principles of the church of Rome by the Oxford Tracts, have rendered this and kindred points the prominent subjects of religious discussion in Great Britain, and consequently, to a great extent in this country. We question whether at any period since the Reformation, or, at least, since the days of Archbishop Laud and the non-jurors, the public mind has been as much turned to these subjects as it is at present. This is no doubt principally owing to the publication of the Oxford Tracts. It is enough to arouse a Protestant community, to hear the Reformation denounced as a schism, Protestantism decried as anti-christian, and all the most dangerous errors of Romanism espoused and defended by members of the leading Protestant university of Europe. It is no wonder that this movement excites the joy of Papists, and the indignation of Protestants. It is no wonder that the press teems with answers to the artful and subtle effusions of men, who, though sustained by a Protestant church, direct all their energies to obliterate her distinctive character and to undermine her doctrines. The wonder rather is that men, professing godliness, can pursue a course so obviously unfair; or that they are allowed to retain the stations which give them support and influence.

\* Originally published in 1842, in review of the following works:

1. *The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice.* By William Goode, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge.
2. *A Treatise concerning the Right Use of the Fathers in the Decision of Controversies in Religion.* By John Daillé, Minister of the Gospel in the Reformed Church at Paris.
3. *Not Tradition, but Scripture.* By Philip N. Shuttleworth, D.D., Warden of New College, Oxford (late Bishop of Chichester).
4. *The Authority of Tradition in Matters of Religion.* By George Holden, M.A.
5. *Tradition Unveiled.* By Baden Powell, of Oriel College, Oxford

It is certainly time, when not only the Romanists are redoubling their efforts for the extension of their errors, but when they find their most efficient allies in our own camp, that Protestants should rouse themselves to a sense of their danger, and renew their protest against the false doctrines of Rome, and their testimony in behalf of the truth of God. It is conceded that the turning point in these controversies is the Rule of Faith. Are the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments the only infallible rule of faith and practice? if so, Romanism and Puseyism are confessedly without any adequate foundation. We say confessedly, first because their advocates admit that the whole controversy turns upon the authority due to tradition; and secondly, because, in enumerating the doctrines which tradition is necessary to prove, they include the very doctrines by which they are distinguished from Protestants. "The complete rule of faith," says a distinguished Romanist, "is scripture joined with tradition, which if Protestants would admit all the other controversies between us and them would soon cease."\* "It may be proved," says Mr. Keble, "to the satisfaction of any reasonable mind, that not a few fragments yet remain, very precious and sacred fragments of the unwritten teaching of the first age of the church. The paramount authority, for example, of the successors of the apostles in church government; the three-fold order established from the beginning; the virtue of the blessed eucharist as a commemorative sacrifice; infant baptism; and above all, the Catholic doctrine of the most Holy Trinity, as contained in the Nicene creed. All these, however surely confirmed from scripture, are yet ascertainable parts of the primitive unwritten system of which we enjoy the benefit."† "Without its aid [i. e. of primitive tradition] humanly speaking, I do not see how we could now retain either real inward communion with our Lord through his apostles, or the very outward face of God's church and kingdom among us. Not to dwell on disputable cases, how but by the tradition and the practice of the early church can we demonstrate the observance of Sunday as the holiest day, or the permanent separation of the clergy from the people as a distinct order? Or where, except in the primitive liturgies, a main branch of that tradition, can we find assurance, that in the holy eucharist, we consecrate as the apostles did, and consequently that the cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ, and the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ?"‡ This, in the language of the sect, means, How but by tradition can we establish the doctrine of the real presence? Again the same writer says, "The points of Catholic consent, known by tradition, constitute the knots and ties of the whole system; being such as these: the canon of scripture, the full doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, the oblation and consecra-

\* See Goode, vol. i., p. 90.

† Keble, Sermon on Tradition, p. 32.

‡ Ib., p. 38.



tion of the eucharist, the apostolical succession." To these he afterwards adds, "baptismal regeneration," and the doctrine "that consecration by apostolical authority is essential to the participation of the eucharist."

After quoting these and many other passages from Mr. Keble's sermon, and from other writings of the Tractarians, Mr. Goode thus enumerates and classifies the doctrines, which according to their system depend on tradition alone, or upon scripture as explained by tradition. "Relating to points disused, 1. The non-literal acceptance of our Lord's words respecting washing one another's feet. 2. The non-observance of the seventh day as a day of religious rest.

"Relating to ordinances in use among us, 1. Infant baptism. 2. The sanctification of the first day of the week. 3. The perpetual obligation of the eucharist. 4. The identity of our mode of consecration in the eucharist with the apostolical. 5. That consecration by apostolical authority is essential to the participation of the eucharist. 6. The separation of the clergy from the people as a distinct order. 7. The three-fold order of the priesthood. 8. The government of the church by bishops. 9. The apostolical succession.

"Of points purely doctrinal, 1. Baptismal regeneration. 2. The virtue of the eucharist as a commemorative sacrifice. 3. That there is an intermediate state, in which the souls of the faithful are purified, and grow in grace; that they pray for us, and that our prayers benefit them.

"Of points concerning matters of fact, and things that do not immediately belong either to the doctrines or the rites of Christianity, 1. The canon of the Scripture. 2. That Melchisedec's feast is a type of the eucharist. 3. That the book of Canticles represents the union between Christ and his church. 4. That wisdom, in the book of Proverbs, refers to the Second Person of the Trinity. 5. The alleged perpetual virginity of the mother of our Lord."

"It is impossible," says Mr. Goode, "not to see that, among all these points, the stress is laid upon those which concern the government and sacraments of the church; and our opponents being persuaded that patristical tradition delivers their system on these points . . . are very anxious that this tradition should be recognised as a divine informant; and in the zealous prosecution of this enterprise, are desirous further of impressing it upon our minds, that almost all the other points relating either to doctrine or practice, yea even the fundamentals of the faith, must stand or fall according as this recognition takes place or not."\* This is true. The writers of the Tracts, knowing and admitting that their peculiar doctrines, that is, doctrines which they hold in common with the Romanists, and which distinguish both from Protestants, cannot be proved except by tradition, are led to assert, not only that

\* Goode, vol. ii., p. 18.

the doctrines peculiar to Episcopalians, but even some of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, rest on the same unstable foundation. If we understand the fundamental principles of Romanism and of the Oxford Tracts they are the following. That sacraments are the only ordinary channels of communicating the grace of the Holy Spirit and the benefits of Christ's merits; that participation of these sacraments is therefore the great means of salvation: that the sacraments have this efficacy only when administered by duly ordained ministers (except that the Papists admit the validity of lay baptism in cases of necessity); that ordination confers the Holy Spirit, and imparts the power and authority to consecrate the bread and wine in the eucharist so that they become the body and blood of Christ, and when offered, are a propitiatory sacrifice effectual for the remission of the sins of the living and the dead; and that the right to ordain and the power to confer the Holy Spirit belong exclusively to prelatical bishops as the successors of the apostles. These, as it seems to us, are the bones, or, as Mr. Keble would say, the knots and ties of the whole system. This is the foundation of the whole fabric of papal and priestly domination and delusion. Bishops are the successors of the apostles "in all the plenitude of their power;" "what Christ was in his own house, such now are they. The authority which he possessed in his human nature, he transfers to them;"\* they alone have the right to confer the authority and power to administer the sacraments which are the appointed channels of grace: hence they are the dispensers of salvation; those whom they excommunicate, justly or unjustly, perish; those whom they receive and retain in communion of the church are saved. Everything depends on them. They are in the place of Christ. That such a system should find favour with the clergy, human nature would lead us to expect; and that it should be adopted by the people, experience teaches us not to be surprised at. It is the easiest of all methods of salvation; the least self-denying, the most agreeable to the indolent and depraved heart. But as it is contrary to the word of God, men adopt it at their peril; and its very attractiveness is a reason why its falsehood and its dangerous tendency should be exposed.

As the advocates of this system urge its acceptance on the ground of tradition, it is not surprising that so large a portion of the works written against the system, are directed against tradition as a rule of faith. All the books mentioned at the head of this article, with one exception, are the productions of clergymen of the Church of England, and were written in answer to the Oxford Tracts. The work of Daillé on the Use of the Fathers, is an old book, which has retained its place as a standard for nearly two centuries, and is the store-house whence modern writers draw not a few of their arguments and illustrations. Its publication by our Board in an improved form, thus rendering it easily accessible at a

\* Mason's Tract on Catholic Unity, p. 10.

cheap rate, is an important service to the church, and we heartily recommend it to the careful study of our fellow ministers. The works of the Bishop of Chichester, of Professor Powell, and of Mr. Holden, have been already noticed in our pages, and are here mentioned again only with a view of renewing our recommendation to our readers to sustain the publisher in his laudable enterprise to disseminate such reasonable books.

Mr. Goode's book, which is dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, is devoted to the refutation of the Oxford Tracts. It gives at length the doctrine on tradition taught in those writings; proves that it is identical with the Popish doctrine on the same subject; demonstrates that patristical tradition is not "a practically infallible witness of the oral teaching of the apostles, nor receivable as a divine informant;" and vindicates the claim of holy scripture as the sole divinely-revealed rule of faith and practice, and sole infallible judge of controversies, and consequently, in the credenda of religion, the sole authority which binds the conscience to belief in what it delivers. He vindicates the fulness and sufficiency of the divine revelation as contained in the scriptures, and in doing this examines at length the doctrines which, as Tractarians affirm, tradition is necessary to establish. He then shows that his doctrine on this whole subject is the doctrine of the fathers themselves, as well as that of the Church of England. He pronounces the appeal made by the Tractators in their *Catena Patrum*, to the opinions of the English divines in support of their doctrines, "one of the most unaccountable, and painful, and culpable (however unintentional) misrepresentations with which history supplies us." He convicts them of the grossest unfairness in quoting in support of their views distorted fragments of works written in direct and avowed opposition to them. He accuses them of borrowing not merely their arguments, but in a great degree their learning, at second hand from the Romanists; and brings forward cases of egregious blunders in their quotations from the fathers. He shows that the famous tract No. 90, designed to show that the thirty-nine articles are consistent with the Tridentine decrees, is little else than the reproduction of a work written by a Jesuit more than two centuries ago.\*

The theory of the traditionists is, that the holy scriptures are both defective and obscure. They contain, indeed, all the essential doctrines of the Gospel, but they give, in many cases, mere hints or notices of them, which could not be understood unless explain-

\* The title of this work is, "*Deus, natura, gratia, sive, Tractatus de Predestinatione, de meritis, et peccatorum remissione, seu de justificatione et denique de sanctorum invocatione. Ubi ad trutinam fidei Catholicae examinatur confessio Anglicana, &c. Accessit paraphrastica expositio reliquorum articulorum confessionis Anglicanae.*" It was written by an English convert to Popery, named Christopher Davenport, and after his conversion called Francis a Sancta Clara, and designed to prove the English articles to be conformable to the Tridentine doctrines. "And for learning and ingenuity our modern reconciler," says Mr. Goode, "is not to be compared to him. But in all the most important points, the similarity between the two is remarkable."



ed and developed by tradition, "It is a near thing," says Tract 85, "that they are in scripture at all; the wonder is that they are all there; humanly judging, they would not be there but for God's interposition; and therefore since they are there by a sort of accident, it is not strange they should be but latent there, and only indirectly producible thence." The same writer says, the gospel doctrine "is but indirectly and covertly recorded in scripture under the surface." But besides these doctrines which are essential to salvation, there are others which are highly important which are not in the scriptures at all, which we are bound to believe. These doctrines we must learn from tradition; it is, therefore, "partly the interpretation, partly the supplement of Scripture."\*

The authority due to tradition is the same as that which belongs to the written word of God. In the language of the Council of Trent, "*Traditiones non scriptas pari pietatis affectu, et reverentia, cum scriptura esse recipiendas.*" So Mr. Keble says, that consentient patristical tradition is "God's unwritten word, demanding the same reverence from us." Dr. Pusey says, "we owe faith to the decisions of the church universal." "Our controversy with Rome," he says, "is not an *à priori* question on the value of tradition in itself, or at an earlier period of the church, or of such traditions as, though not contained in scripture, are primitive, universal, and apostolical, but it is one purely historical, that the Romanist traditions, not being such, but on the contrary repugnant to scripture, are not to be received."

The ground on which this authority is ascribed to tradition is, that it is a practically infallible informant of the oral instructions of Christ and his apostles. "Let us understand," says Mr. Newman, "what is meant by saying that antiquity is of authority in religious questions. Both Romanists and ourselves maintain as follows: that whatever doctrine the primitive ages unanimously attest, whether by consent of fathers, or by councils, or by the events of history, or by controversies, or in whatever way, whatever may fairly and reasonably be considered the universal belief of those ages, is to be received as coming from the apostles." This is the ground commonly taken both by Romanists and the Oxford writers. Certain doctrines are to be received, not on the authority of the fathers, but upon their testimony that those doctrines were taught by the apostles. Both however rely more or less on the gift of the Holy Spirit communicated by the imposition of hands, who guides the representative church into the knowledge of the truth, and renders it infallible. "Not only," says Mr. Newman, "is the church catholic bound to teach the truth, but she is ever divinely guided to teach it; her witness of the Christian faith is a matter of promise as well as of duty; her discernment of it is secured by a heavenly as well as a human rule. She is indefectible in it, and therefore not only has authority to enforce it, but is of authority in

declaring it. The church not only transmits the faith by human means, but has a supernatural gift for that purpose ; that doctrine which is true, considered as an historical fact, is true also because she teaches it.”\* Hence he says, “that when the sense of scripture, as interpreted by reason, is contrary to the sense given to it by Catholic antiquity, we ought to side with the latter.” Page 160.

Such being the high office of tradition, it is a matter of great moment to decide how we are to ascertain what tradition teaches. The common answer to this question is, Catholic consent ; whatever has been believed always, everywhere, and by all, must be received as derived from the apostles.

Such then is the theory. The scriptures are obscure and defective. They contain only covertly and under the surface even, some of the essential doctrines of the Gospel ; and some important doctrines they do not contain at all. The oral teaching of the apostles was sufficient to explain these obscurities and to supply these defects, and was of course of equal authority with their written instructions. This oral teaching has been handed down to us by the church catholic, which is a divinely appointed and divinely guided witness of the truth. To her decisions, therefore, we owe faith. And as every particular church may err, our security is in adhering to the church universal, which is practically infallible.

It rarely if ever happens that any theory on any subject gains credence among any number of competent men, which has not a great deal of truth in it. And of the two great causes of the long-continued and extensive prevalence of faith in tradition as a divine informant, one no doubt is, that there is so much truth in the theory as above propounded ; and the other is, that men find tradition to teach what they are anxious to believe. The principal elements of truth in the above theory are, first, that the testimony of God is the only adequate foundation of faith in matters of religion ; second, that as much confidence is due to the oral teachings of the apostles as to their written instructions ; and third, that the fact that all true Christians in every age have believed any doctrine, admits of no other satisfactory solution, than that such doctrine was derived from the apostles.

The application of these principles and the arguments founded upon them by the traditionists, are, however, full of fallacy and unfairness. They speak of the church catholic being, in virtue of the promise of God, indefectible, and practically infallible, as far as concerns fundamental truth. This every one will admit, if you take the word church in its scriptural sense. The church is the body of true believers ; the company of faithful men. That this company cannot err in essential doctrines ; that is, that all true Christians will, by the grace of God, ever believe all that is essential to their salvation, we have no disposition to dispute. And moreover, that the promise of our Lord secures the continued ex-

\* Lectures on Romanism, &c., p. 225.



istence of his church, or, in other words, a continued succession of true believers, we also readily admit. And we are consequently ready to acknowledge, that if you can ascertain what this church (i. e., true Christians) has ever, everywhere, and universally believed, you have a practically infallible rule for determining, as far as fundamentals are concerned, what is the true faith. But of what avail is all this? How are you to ascertain the faith of all true believers in every age and in every part of the world? They have never formed a distinct, visible society, even in any one age or place, much less in all ages and places. They are scattered here and there in all visible churches, known and numbered by no eye but His who searches the heart. You might as well attempt to collect the suffrages of all the amiable men who have ever lived, as to gather the testimony of all the people of God to any one doctrine. And if it could be done, what would it amount to? You would find them agreed in receiving the doctrines which lie on the very face of scripture, and in nothing else. You would find that the plain testimony of God had been universally understood and received by his people. This would not be a source of new information, though it might be a consolation, and a confirmation of our faith.

The first fallacy and unfairness of traditionists then is, confounding the true church, or the company of faithful men, with the external and visible church. As it is an acknowledged impossibility to ascertain the opinions of the sincere people of God, they appeal to the promiscuous mass of professing Christians, organized in different societies in various parts of the world. This proceeding is obviously fallacious and unfair. There is no promise of God, securing any or every external church from apostasy, even as to fundamental truth. As far as we know, every external organization connected with the Jewish church had apostatized in the days of Ahab; the seven thousand, who had not bowed the knee to Baal, were hid from the sight of Elias. During the prevalence of the Arian heresy, the great majority of the churches had departed from the faith; popes and councils declared in favour of Pelagianism; and in the ages before the Reformation, if the voice of the external church, or the mass of professing Christians, is to be taken as the voice of the true people of God, and a practical and infallible witness of the truth, we shall have the Bible completely superseded, and the whole mass of popish error and superstition firmly established. The rule of the traditionists, therefore, which is true in relation to "the faith of God's elect," is as false and fallacious as possible in its application to the external church.

But besides this, the voice of all professing Christians, everywhere and at all times, it is impossible to ascertain. And if it could be ascertained, the points of agreement would not include one half of the doctrines admitted to be fundamental. It is notorious that neither the doctrines of the Trinity, nor of the atonement, nor of regeneration, have been received everywhere, always, and by all; much less have all so far agreed in their explanations of these

doctrines as to retain what all admit to be essential to their integrity. To meet the former of these difficulties, that is, to obviate the difficulty arising from the impossibility of gathering the faith of the whole visible church, traditionists insist that we are bound to take the testimony of the pastors or rulers of the church. But in the first place, the pastors are not the church, and the promises given to the church were consequently not given to them. The declaration, that the church shall never perish, does not mean that the great body of its pastors shall never become unfaithful. Again, though the number of pastors is so much less than that of the whole church, the impossibility of gathering their united testimony to any one truth is not less clear and decided. This cannot be done in any one age, much less in all ages and places. Who can gather the opinions of all the present ministers of the Church of England? Their public creed does not express their opinions, for they differ fundamentally in their explanation of that creed. Some are virtually Romanists: some are Pelagians; some are Calvinists; some, we know, have been Socinians. Mr. Newman tells us, "In the English church, we shall hardly find ten or twenty neighbouring clergymen who agree together; and that, not in non-essentials of religion, but as to what are its elementary and necessary doctrines; or as to the fact whether there are any necessary doctrines at all, any distinct and definite faith required for salvation."\* And on the same page, speaking of the laity, he says, "If they go to one church they hear one doctrine, in the next that comes they hear another; if they try to unite the two, they are obliged to drop important elements in each, and waste down and attenuate the faith to a mere shadow." The leading modern advocate of tradition therefore assures us that we cannot gather the faith of the English clergy, even as to "elementary and necessary doctrines," from their public creeds; that they do not in fact agree, and that it is impossible to find out what they believe. All this is said of a church with which we are contemporary; in an age of printing, of speaking, of assemblies, and of every other means of intercommunion and publication of opinions; an age of censuses and statistics, when the colour of every man's eyes may almost be ascertained and published to the world. And yet this same man would have us believe that he can tell what all pastors everywhere believed, seventeen centuries ago, not in one church, but in all churches! If the creed of the church of England does not express the faith of the English clergy, how are we to know that the creeds of the ancient church express the faith of the clergy of the early centuries? The difficulty is greatly increased by the consideration, that there was no one creed which the clergy were then obliged to adopt and subscribe, as at the present day. What is now called the apostles' creed, was only the creed of the Church of Rome, and did not assume its present form before the fourth century. Irenæus, Tertullian and

\* Lectures, p. 395.

Origen have left formulas of doctrine for which they claim the consent of all the churches, but even these afford very imperfect evidence of the consent of all the pastors. In the first place, the testimony of a few men as to what all other men believe, is of no decisive weight. Let Dr. Pusey, or Mr. Newman, state the faith of the English church, and it will be one thing ; let the Bishop of Chester state it, and it will be quite a different thing. In the second place, these creeds contain some things which are incorrect, and in all probability the faith of a very small part of the existing church. Thus Origen says the whole church believed, that the scriptures "have not only a sense which is apparent, but also another which is concealed from most. For those things which are described are the outlines of certain mysteries, and the images of divine things." He says, it is not clearly discerned whether the Holy Spirit is to be considered "as begotten or not," or as Jerome says the words were, "made or not made." Origen himself believed him to be a creature. Tertullian's exposition of the Trinity, if understood according to his own sense of the terms, is as little orthodox as that of Origen. Here then the very earliest creeds now extant, for which the faith of all churches was claimed, are yet infected with acknowledged error. They did not and could not represent the faith of all the pastors of the age of their authors, much less the faith of all who had preceded them.

But suppose we should admit that the early creeds ought to be taken as expressing the sense of the whole ancient church, what should we gain by it ? They contain nothing beyond the simplest doctrines of the scripture, and that in such general terms as decide nothing against Arianism, Pelagianism, and various other forms of error. They have no relation to the points in dispute between Papists and Protestants, or between Oxford and the English Reformers. They yield no support to the baptismal regeneration, the sacrifice of the mass, or episcopal grace. As far as the creeds are concerned, they are an insufficient and uncertain evidence of catholic consent ; and, if admitted, decide nothing as to any one of the questions between Protestants and traditionists.

Appeal however is made to the decisions of councils. These bodies, called together by public authority and representing all parts of the church, are regarded as bearing trustworthy testimony as to the Catholic faith. But to this argument it has been fairly objected that the church catholic does not admit of being represented. The delegates from the several provinces can at best represent only the majorities in the bodies deputing them. The minorities, whether large or small, must be unrepresented. Experience teaches us that truth is not always with the many. What would have been the fate of orthodoxy had it been put to the vote under Constantius or Valens ? What would have become of Protestantism, had all churches sent delegates to Trent, and the cause of God been confided to the decision of the urn ? Our objection, however, now is, that no general council can so represent the church as to



give us satisfactory evidence of the faith of all its members. Another objection is that the councils called general are not deserving of the name. They have in no case been either a full or fair representation of the existing church. Take that of Nice for example. We should be glad to believe that Christendom was, as to the main point, there fully represented. But what are the facts? There were present at that council about three hundred and eighteen bishops; of these, seventeen were from the little province of Isauria; while there was but one from all Africa, but one from Spain, and but one from Gaul. Is it not absurd to say that one bishop could represent the faith of a whole province, and that one acting without authority and without delegation? Suppose the attempt to be now made to hold a general council, and an invitation to be issued to all bishops and presbyters to assemble at a given time and place. Suppose further that Mr. Newman should attend from England, Bishop Hughes from America, the Abbé Genoude from France, could the assent of these volunteer delegates, with any show of reason, be taken as proving what was the faith of the Church of England, or of the church of God in these United States? Yet this was the way in which councils were generally called. The reigning emperor issued his summons, and those who had the inclination or ability attended; those who were disinclined to the object of the council, or unable to travel, remained at home. It is obvious that such councils could not give a fair expression to the voice of the church. It may be said indeed, that, however imperfect the representation, the acquiescence of all parts of the church in their decisions, affords proof of unanimity of faith. There would be some force in this suggestion, had we any evidence of such acquiescence. We know however that decisions in councils were in almost all important cases more or less resisted; and the struggle continued until one party or the other obtained the advantage, and then, by excommunicating the dissentients, the voice of the whole church was claimed for the majority. This has been the course of Rome from the beginning. Refusing to recognise as a part of the church all who do not adhere to her, she boasts of having the suffrage of the whole church in her favour.

A still more decisive proof that councils cannot be relied upon as expressing the faith of the whole church, is that they contradict each other. The council of Nice decided against Arianism; a much larger council, within twenty-five years, decided in its favour.\* The church was thrown into a state of violent contention. At one period or in one part of the empire the orthodox prevailed; in others, the Arians. Each party had their councils; each at differ-

\* The council which met for the western church at Ariminum, and for the eastern at Seleucia, "which," says Bishop Stillingfleet, "make up the most general council we read of in church history. For Bellarmine owns that there were six hundred bishops in the western part of it. So that there were many more bishops assembled there than were in the councils of Nice; there was no exception against the summons nor against the bishops present."

ent times could claim the majority of the whole church; one bishop of Rome was with the orthodox, another with the Arians, and thus the conflict was continued with various success for more than three hundred years. How then can catholic consent be claimed for the Nicene creed? If catholic consent means the consent of all, everywhere, and at all times, it is a gross imposition and absurdity to claim it for a creed with regard to which for a long time Christendom was nearly equally divided.

The heresy of Eutyches, respecting the person of Christ, was first condemned by a council held at Constantinople, A. D. 448; then approved by the second general council at Ephesus, in 449; and then again condemned by the council of Chalcedon, in 451. Pelagianism was condemned in Africa, sanctioned in Palestine, approved by the council of Diospolis, pronounced to be according to scripture, in the first instance, by the Bishop of Rome, afterwards repudiated by the same bishop, and finally condemned by the council of Ephesus, A. D. 431. Even with regard to the canon of scripture, we have council against council; that of Laodicea excluding the Apocrypha, that of Carthage including them in the list of inspired books. It is therefore a plain historical fact, that even those councils, which have most deserved the name of general, have not agreed, and therefore can neither be regarded as infallible, nor as any conclusive evidence of catholic consent.

There is another objection to the notion that the faith of the church universal can be gathered from the decisions of councils, which ought not to be overlooked. The authority of tradition is, both by Romanists and the writers of the Oxford Tracts, defended mainly on the ground of its apostolic origin. The fact that all Christians have received any doctrine is held to be proof that it was derived from the apostles; and to ascertain what all the early Christians believed, we are referred to the decisions of the ancient general councils. But unfortunately, there was no council, having the least pretension to be called general, held during the first three centuries. How is this chasm to be got over? We can understand how an assembly, even at the present day, with the scriptures before them, can give a judgment as to the doctrines of Christianity, which shall be entitled to all the deference due to their opinion. But since the world began, has any such thing been known as the transmission of unwritten doctrines unchanged for three hundred years? Without a miracle, for which we have neither promise nor evidence, the thing is impossible. Would it be possible for the present clergy of Germany to bear trustworthy testimony to the unwritten teaching of Luther and Melancthon? Does there exist now in England any knowledge of the doctrines of the Reformers, not to be gathered from their writings? Would not the claim of an English convocation to enforce any doctrine, not contained in their Articles, Liturgy, or Homilies, on the ground of traditionary knowledge of the oral teaching of Cranmer or Latimer, be received with ridicule by the whole church? How then can we believe



that the council of Nice had any tradition or knowledge of the oral teaching of the apostles worthy of confidence? If a tradition cannot be traced up historically to the times of the apostles, it can, on the very principles, though not according to the practice, of our opponents, be of no authority. The prevalence of an opinion in the church, three hundred years after the apostles, is no proof that it was derived from the apostles, any more than the prevalence of Arminianism in the Church of England, or of Rationalism in Germany, proves that these forms of error were derived from the Reformers. It is therefore not from the decisions of councils that we can gather catholic consent.

The only other important source of knowledge of the faith of the early church, is the writings of the fathers. It has been assumed that the consent or agreement of the early Christian writers, in the belief of any doctrine, is to be considered satisfactory evidence of the derivation of such doctrine or usage from the apostles. Traditionists have generally felt the necessity of some caution in laying down this rule. It is so obvious that the fathers differ among themselves, and that the same father differs in many cases from himself, that we are cautioned carefully to distinguish between what they deliver as teachers, which is often erroneous, from what they deliver as witnesses. It is necessary that we should have not only their unanimous consent, but also their unanimous testimony, that the doctrine taught is part of the faith of the church. We do not say that traditionists adhere to these limitations, for they do not, but they feel the necessity of stating them, to secure even the semblance of authority for their rule.

The question then is, whether the unanimous consent of the fathers is proof of the apostolic origin of any doctrine? This question, as far as it has any bearing on the present controversy, must be understood of doctrines, not clearly contained in the scriptures. Their unanimous consent to the being of a God, to the divine mission of Christ, to the fact that he was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, that he rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven; cannot be considered as in any degree increasing our assurance that these doctrines and facts are contained in the New Testament. It is not for such purposes that their testimony is required. But is their consent a warrant to us of the oral teaching of the apostles? Must we believe what they happen to agree in believing? We think this a most unreasonable demand, for, in the first place, the consent of some sixteen writers, is very insufficient evidence of the faith of the whole Christian church for three hundred years, and it is only as witnesses for catholic consent that their writings are assumed to be of any authority. The fact that the remains of the first three centuries are so scanty, creates of itself almost an impossibility that we should find in them any fair or full representation of the whole church during that long period. Would any man dream of extracting from some ten or twenty works, many of

them mere fragments, taken at hazard from the whole list of English divines, any knowledge of the doctrines of the English Reformers, which is not to be found in their authentic writings? Would it not be considered in the highest degree absurd, to maintain that the interpretation of the thirty-nine articles must be regulated by the consent of these fragments? Suppose all these remains of English theology were of one school, say the Laudean, what view should we then be forced to take of the English articles? Or suppose that some were of the school of Whitgift, some of that of Laud, and some of that of Hoadly, contradicting each other on almost all points, each accusing the others of departure from the faith of the church; would it not be a perfectly hopeless task, to attempt to gather from their conflicting statements, the meaning of the articles? Yet this, and even worse than this, is the rule of faith which traditionists would impose upon the church. We say worse, for the supposed fragments of English writers would at least be all genuine, in a language we understand, relating to controversies with which we are familiar. The remains of the first centuries have no one of these advantages. They are confessedly more or less mutilated and corrupted. It is really a matter of surprise to read the frequent and loud complaints made by the fathers of the frauds to which they were subjected. Spurious writings were issued on all occasions; the writings of distinguished men curtailed or interpolated to serve the purposes of a party. We hear not only of the gospel of St. Thomas, the epistle to the Laodiceans, of the acts of Paul and Thecla, but complaints are made of the name of one father being put to the writings of another to give them currency. This is a difficulty and an evil which Romanists themselves are forced to admit. On this point Mr. Goode remarks, "Above one hundred and eighty treatises, professing to be written by authors of the first six centuries, are repudiated by the more learned of the Romanists themselves, as, most of them, rank forgeries, and the others not written by those whose names they bear; though, be it observed, they have been quoted over and over again by celebrated controversial writers of the Romish communion, in support of their errors against Protestants." An evil still greater than forgery, because more difficult to detect, is interpolation. Many of the early Greek works are extant only in a Latin translation, which is so corrupt as to be unworthy of credit. This is the case with the work of Irenæus, and with the translations by Ruffinus, whom Jerome charges with the most shameless adulteration of his authors. This is a subject which cannot be treated without going into details, which our limits forbid. It is however a notorious fact that the remains of the early ages have come down to us in a most corrupted state, and that it is a task of great difficulty, if not of absolute impossibility, to separate what is genuine from what is spurious. What a rule of faith is here!

But besides this difficulty, the writings of the fathers are on various accounts hard to be understood; not only because of the lan-

guage in which they are written, but from the principles on which their authors proceeded. They relate also in a great degree to controversies with which we have no immediate concern, being directed against Paganism, or obsolete heresies. These are the writings which are to remove the obscurities of scripture, and supply its deficiencies. We might as well take the waters of the Thames, after it has traversed all London, to purify the limpid river at its source.

Besides all this, the fathers are not trustworthy, as witnesses of the faith of the early church. They are too credulous. This is proved by the fact, that they claim the support of tradition for acknowledged error or for opposing doctrines. Some say they derived it from the successors of the apostles, that our Lord was fifty years old at the time of his death; others, on the same authority, assure us that his ministry continued but for one year; Origen, as we have seen, claims the tradition of all the churches in support of the allegorical sense of the historical parts of scripture; he says tradition leaves it doubtful whether the sun, moon, and stars, have souls or not. Papias, who flourished about ninety years after Christ, says, "As the elders remember, who saw John the disciple of the Lord, that they heard from him what the Lord taught about those times, and said, The days shall come in which vines shall exist, each containing 10,000 shoots, and in each shoot shall be 10,000 arms, and in each true shoot shall be 10,000 branches, and on every branch 10,000 clusters, and in every cluster 10,000 grapes, and every grape, when pressed, shall give twenty-five firkins of wine," &c., &c., &c. This account is endorsed by Irenæus, who quotes Papias "as a hearer and companion of Polycarp." The eastern churches affirmed that the observance of Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon, had been delivered to them by the apostle John; the Romans and those in the western parts said that their usage was delivered by the apostles Peter and Paul. Cyprian insisted that those who had been baptized by heretics and schismatics, should be rebaptized, and appeals to the catholic faith and church in his support. Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, said, "The apostles forbade that those who came over from any heresy should be baptized, and delivered this to posterity to be observed." Augustin says, it is the "catholic faith," that all unbaptized infants are lost, though he is suspected of being himself the father of the doctrine. Many claim the authority of the church for the notion that the angels have bodies. Some say that tradition taught that all souls are immediately created, others that they are derived, *ex traduce*. So in all their disputes, each party appealed to tradition in its own behalf, and condemned all others. The heretics, especially, driven by argument from the scriptures, were distinguished by their appeals to patristical tradition. Irenæus says, "When they are re-proved by the scriptures they immediately begin to accuse the scriptures themselves, as if they were not correct, nor of authority, and that they are not consistent; and that the truth cannot be



found out from them by those who are ignorant of tradition." The same complaint is made by other fathers.

The thing to be proved is, that certain doctrines are derived from the oral teaching of the apostles. The proof is, that the fathers say so. We answer, their saying so is no sufficient proof. They are too few, too far removed from the apostles; their testimony is hard to get at, since so many writings are attributed to them which they never wrote, and since their genuine writings are so much corrupted; besides, their testimony when obtained is not decisive, because they testify to what cannot be true. They say they received doctrines from the apostles, which everybody must admit to be false; and they make the claim for conflicting statements. No court, civil or ecclesiastical, would decide any cause involving the value of a straw on such testimony.

To all this it may be said, that admitting all that has been urged, still, where the fathers do all concur, there we have ground to believe they are right, often as they are individually wrong. To this we answer, that the consent of the few writers of the first three centuries is as nothing compared with the whole church which they are assumed to represent. But further, their consent can be fairly pleaded for nothing which is now a matter of dispute. They agree in nothing but the plainest and simplest biblical facts and doctrines. Hear what even Bishop Taylor, one of the witnesses quoted by Mr. Keble in his *Catena Patrum* in favor of tradition, says on this subject. "Catholic consent," he says, "cannot be proved in anything but in the canon of scripture itself; and, as it is now received, even in that there is some variety." Again: "There is no question this day in contestation in the explication of which all the old writers did consent. In the assignation of the canon of scripture, they never did consent for six hundred years together; and when by that time the bishops had agreed indifferently, and but indifferently upon that, they fell out in twenty more; and except it be the apostles' creed and articles of that nature, there is nothing which may, with any colour, be called a consent, much less tradition universal."\* This want of consent of the fathers of the first three centuries; their silence or their conflicting statements on all questions having any bearing on present controversies, is so obvious and notorious, that it is virtually conceded even by traditionists themselves. The author of *Tract 85* says, in reference both to the canon of scripture and to "catholic doctrines," "We believe mainly because the church of the fourth and fifth unanimously believed." "We depend for the canon and creed upon the fourth and fifth centuries. . . . Viewing the matter as one of moral evidence, we seem to see in the testimony of the fifth, the very testimony which every preceding century gave, ACCIDENTS EXCEPTED, such as the present loss of documents once extant, or the then existing misconceptions which the want of intercourse

\* See his *Liberty of Prophesying*, sec. v., 8.

among the churches occasioned. The fifth century acts as a comment on the obscure text of the centuries before it, and brings out a meaning which, with the help of the comment, any candid person sees to belong to them. And in the same way as regards the catholic creed, though there is not much to account for. Not so much, for no one, I suppose, will deny that in the fathers of the fourth century, it is as fully developed and as unanimously adopted as it can be in the fifth." This is the precise doctrine of the Romanists. The obscurities and deficiencies of scripture are to be explained or supplied by the writings of the first three centuries; the obscurities and deficiencies of those centuries are to be made good by the writings of the fourth and fifth; those of the fourth and fifth, by the tenth and twelfth, those of the tenth and twelfth, by the fifteenth and sixteenth. Thus we have the whole accumulated mass of superstition and error sanctioned by apostolic authority, and imposed upon the church. It is as plain as it can be that we have here the concession of the failure of the whole theory. The theory is, that the oral teachings of the apostles are a part of our present rule of faith; that catholic consent is our warrant for believing certain doctrines to be part of that oral teaching; catholic consent is the consent and testimony of the whole church at all times. But it is admitted that the first three centuries do not testify to what are called catholic doctrines. This fact is accounted for by loss of documents and misconceptions of the churches. To account for a fact is to admit it. It is admitted, therefore, that the first three centuries do not consent to or testify catholic doctrines. To say that the first three do, because the fourth and fifth do, is so unreasonable as to give the whole matter the air of insincerity and imposture. Is the rationalism of the present German churches an exponent of the faith of those churches during the preceding century? Is the Socinianism of the modern clergy of Geneva a proof that Calvin and Beza were Socinians? Or are the Pelagianism and infidelity of the English church, during a large part of the 18th century, when, according to Bishop Butler, Christianity itself seemed to be regarded as a fable "among all persons of discernment," to be considered as proving the faith of that church in the preceding centuries? Here is a church, a true church, an episcopal church, an apostolic church, to which all the promises ever made to an external church belong in all their plenitude, sunk so low as scarcely to retain the semblance of belief; and even now, according to Mr. Newman, you cannot find any ten or twenty of its neighbouring clergy who agree even in the elementary and necessary doctrines of the gospel. With what colour, then, of reason, or even honesty, can it be maintained that all the superstitions and false doctrines of the fifth century are to be taken as part of the faith of the first three centuries, and of the apostles themselves? Of all rules by which to determine what men must believe in order to be saved, this would seem to be the most absurd. We believe, say the Tractarians, not because the apostles believed, not even be-



cause the early church believed, but because the fifth century believed.

This, however, is not the only way in which traditionists abandon their own theory. They believe many doctrines for which catholic consent cannot be pleaded, and they reject many in which the early church were to a very great degree unanimous. With regard to the first class, we of course do not believe that the consent of the three centuries can be fairly claimed for prelatical episcopacy. We might, without undue confidence, say we know that it cannot be so claimed; not only because such consent, according to Bishop Taylor, can be claimed for nothing except such principles of the faith as are contained in the apostles' creed, but because it is notorious that the identity of the office of bishop and presbyter was maintained by many in the early church, and that presbyters had the right of ordaining bishops even after the introduction of prelacy. Mr. Goode himself, while he holds episcopacy to be of apostolical origin, admits that its necessity cannot be proved. "If," he says, "in any church, a presbyter be appointed by his co-presbyters to be bishop, or superintendent, or president of that church, and perform the usual duties of the episcopal function, we cannot prove either by scripture, or by the consent of the apostolically-primitive church, that his acts are by apostolic ordinance invalid." Again: "Supposing the apostles to have appointed the first bishops in twelve churches, I want to know where we are informed that when the bishop of one of them died, the church of the deceased bishop depended upon the will and pleasure of the remaining eleven bishops for a president, and could not appoint and create, to all intents and purposes, its own president, out of its own body of presbyters."\* As for the popish doctrine of orders, episcopal grace, the sacrificial character of the eucharist, &c., it is, as we have already seen, virtually admitted, that they cannot be sustained by the consent of the first centuries. They rest upon the fifth, even in the creed of their advocates.

But besides these false doctrines, which are not only not in the scriptures, but anti-scriptural, there are important and even fundamental scriptural doctrines for which not even the general consent of fathers can be produced. The early fathers were accustomed to use the language of the Bible in their religious discourses, and unless driven to explanations by the errors of opposers, they seldom so defined as to render their testimony available against the subtle heretics of later time. They spoke of Christ as God, they prayed to him, they worshipped him; but the Arians were willing to do all this. And if the doctrine of the essential equality of the Father and Son in the adorable Trinity is to depend upon tradition, it cannot be proved at all. It is also a notorious fact that the divinity of the Holy Spirit, plainly as it is taught in scripture, is not a doctrine for which catholic consent can be claimed. Jerome

\* Vol. ii., pp. 58, 59.

says, "Many, through ignorance of the scriptures, assert that the Father and Son are often called Holy Spirit. And while we ought clearly to believe in a Trinity, they, taking away the third person, imagine it not to be a hypostasis of the Trinity, but a name." Basil says, the question concerning the Holy Spirit was "passed over in silence by the ancients, and owing to its not being opposed, was left unexplained." And he therefore proceeded to discuss it "according to the mind of scripture." A doctrine which the ancients passed over in silence, they cannot be cited to prove. If, therefore, tradition is our rule of faith; if we are to believe nothing for which catholic consent cannot be produced, we shall have to give up even the essential doctrines of the gospel.

The traditionists moreover depart from their own theory, or rather, show that they proceed in a perfectly arbitrary manner, by rejecting many doctrines for which a much greater degree of unanimity among the fathers can be produced than for those which they adopt. Mr. Keble says, "We know with certainty that Melchisedec's feast was a type of the blessed eucharist," "from the constant agreement of the early church." In proof, he refers to Cyprian, Augustine, Jerome, and the Roman liturgy, as "representing the sense of the western church," and to Chrysostom for the Greek. This is proof of the constant agreement of the early church! One man in the first three hundred years of the church, and one for the whole Greek church, and this is taken as fulfilling the condition, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*! Why, twice the amount of evidence of antiquity and catholicity may be produced for the grossest heresies or the greatest absurdities. This is only an illustration of the coolness with which catholicity is claimed for any doctrine which suits the feelings of the writer. It cannot be denied that three times as much evidence can be produced of a general belief in the early church of the unlawfulness of oaths, of the necessity of infant communion, of the establishment of a glorious visible kingdom at Jerusalem, of the re-appearance of Enoch and Elias to wage war with antichrist, and for other doctrines and usages which modern traditionists unhesitatingly reject. It is true, therefore, what Bishop Taylor says, that "it is not *honest*" to press the authority of the fathers, unless we "are willing to submit in all things to the testimony of an equal number of them, which I am certain neither side will do." It is a sheer impossibility to prove anything by the rule of the traditionists as they state it, because catholic consent is absolutely unattainable. The rule is worthless as it stands; and if they choose to assume catholic consent in one instance on a certain amount of testimony, let them assume it in others, on the same degree of evidence, before they attempt to urge it upon others as "the unwritten word of God."

The advocates of tradition as a part of the rule of faith are therefore chargeable with great fallacy and unfairness. They lay down a rule which, according to its obvious meaning, commands the assent of all men. They say what all true Christians, in all

ages and everywhere, have believed, must, as far as the essential doctrines of the gospel are concerned, be regarded as part of the faith once delivered to the saints. This is undoubtedly true ; but they immediately and artfully substitute for true Christians, the external visible church, with regard to which it is not true that it cannot err even in fundamental doctrines. And further, though the consent of all visible churches, at all times and places, would not be conclusive proof of the truth of any doctrine, it would be a very strong proof, they assume such consent on the most insufficient evidence ; evidence which they themselves reject in its application to the church at the present time, and, in many cases, in its application to the ancient church. If an ancient church had a creed, that creed expressed the faith of all its members. The Church of England has a creed, which is no index, according to these same writers, to the faith of its clergy. If a delegate attended an ancient council from Africa or Gaul, he fairly represented his province, and committed his brethren to the decisions of the council. The delegate of the Church of England sanctions Calvinism at the Synod of Dort, and he is a mere individual, misrepresenting and dishonouring the church to which he belonged. Some half-dozen fathers in the course of as many centuries testify to one doctrine, and it is " catholic consent ;" twenty or thirty testify to another doctrine, and it is set down to the " misconceptions of the churches." Antiquity is said to be necessary to prove a tradition apostolical ; but if the first of these three centuries is silent on the subject or opposed to the tradition, we may suppose loss of documents or misinformation. We must believe what the fifth century believed, and take for granted that the preceding centuries agreed with it. This boasted rule therefore turns out to be no rule at all. It cannot from its nature be applied, and therefore we must take the opinion of one age, as evidence of antiquity, universality and catholicity.

One of the most natural and uniform effects of making tradition a part of the rule of faith, is to destroy the authority of the Bible. Our Saviour charged the Pharisees with making the word of God of none effect by their traditions. The Talmud has superseded the Law of Moses among the modern Jews ; and the whole system of popery is sustained on the authority of the church teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Chillingworth well says, " He that would usurp an absolute lordship and tyranny over any people, need not put himself to the trouble and difficulty of abrogating and disannulling the laws, made to maintain the common liberty ; for he may frustrate their intent and gain his own design as well, if he can get the power and authority to interpret them as he pleases, and add to them what he pleases, and to have his interpretations and additions stand for laws ; if he can rule his people by his laws, and his law by his lawyers."\* This is the avowed

\* Chillingworth's Works, American edition, p. 105.



office of tradition, as the interpretation and supplement of scripture. It undertakes to explain the sense and to supply the defects of the word of God ; and in doing this it effectually supersedes its authority. "When the sense of scripture, as interpreted by reason," says Mr. Newman, "is contrary to that given it by catholic antiquity, we ought to side with the latter." This is practically saying, that when scripture and tradition clash, we must side with tradition. This must in practice be its meaning. For to say when scripture interpreted by reason gives a certain sense, can mean only, when we believe it to convey that sense. That is, we must give up what we believe to be the meaning of the word of God, to the authority of tradition, which is but another name for the authority of man. If the Bible says, we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ ; and tradition says, we are justified by baptism ; then the Bible is made to mean not the faith of the individual, but of the church. If the Bible says, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God ; and tradition says, Whosoever is baptized is born again ; then the Bible is made to mean, that baptism conveys the Holy Spirit in every case, where there is not the special impediment of mortal sin. If the Saviour says, Come unto me all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest ; and tradition says, There is no remission of sin without priestly absolution ; then our Lord is made to mean, we must come unto him through the priest. If the Bible requires repentance, and tradition penance ; then repentance means penance. The Bible addresses its instructions, its promises, its threatenings, to every reader, according to his character. It speaks to him that reads it, promising to the penitent believer pardon of sin, the aid of the Holy Spirit, and the light of God's countenance ; tradition says there are no promises but to the church, and there is no church where there is not a certain form of government. Thus, through the whole system of divine truth, the Bible yields to tradition ; the voice of God is drowned in that of men ; the merits of Christ are abstracted by the priest, who for bread gives us a stone, and for an egg, scorpions.

The writings of the traditionists are consequently filled with irreverent depreciation of the scriptures. They are said to contain even essential truths only by a sort of accident ; it is a wonder that they are all there, and though there, they are latent, hid under the surface, intimated by mere hints and notices. "The Bible," it is said, "does not carry its own interpretation." The texts of scripture "may imply the catholic doctrine, but they need not ; they are consistent with any of several theories, or at any rate other persons think so." The answers which Unitarians make to Trinitarians, in defence of their claim to be considered orthodox, are said to be resistless, if we grant that the Bible is "the sole authoritative judge in controversies of faith." Certain individuals, says Mr. Newman, may not be injured by this principle, but "the body of men who profess it are, and ever must be injured. For the mass of men, having no moral convictions, are led by reasoning, and by

mere consistency of argument, and legitimately evolve heresy from principles which to the better sort of men may be harmless." In the same tone Dr. Hook says, "I believe it to be only on account of their being bad logicians, that they are not Socinians. I believe that they ought to be, if consistent, both Dissenters and Socinians. If they accuse church principles of tending to popery, we think that their opinions must lead logical and unprejudiced minds to Socinianism."\* According to the traditionists, therefore, men may, and the mass of them must, legitimately evolve heresy from the Bible, which, if taken by itself, "must lead logical and unprejudiced minds to Socinianism." It is thus that men allow themselves to speak of the word of God, in order to exalt tradition. Nay, worse than this, they seem willing to destroy all faith, that they may introduce their system of priestly and ecclesiastical domination. For, unable to meet the obvious objection, that if the Bible is obscure, so are the fathers; if the latent doctrines of the scriptures are hard to find, so is catholic consent; they say that doubt is essential to faith;† that we have, at most, only probability to show for revelation at all, or even for the existence of an intelligent Creator.‡ They assert that there is but "a balance on the side of revelation;" "there are, so to say, three chances for revelation, and only two against it." The whole ground of faith is swept away, and mere feeling put in its place. "Why," asks the author of Tract 85, "why should not the church be divine? The burden of proof is surely on the other side. I will accept her doctrines, and her rites, and her Bible—not one, and not the other, but all—till I have a clear proof that she is mistaken. It is, *I feel*, God's will that I should do so; and besides I love these, her possessions—I love her Bible (?) her doctrines, and her rites, and therefore I believe." This is the same gentleman who says, "We believe mainly because the church of the fourth and fifth centuries

\* This is quoted by Mr. Goode, vol. i., p. 487, as said of those who hold that "the Bible is the sole, infallible rule of faith."

† "Evidence complete in all its parts," says Mr. Keble, "leaves no room for faith." Sermon on Tradition, p. 52. Newman says, "Doubt may even be said to be implied in a Christian's faith." Lectures, p. 104.

‡ Speaking of the appeal to antiquity, Mr. Newman says, "Where men are indisposed to such an appeal, where they are determined to be captious and to take exceptions, and act the disputant and sophist instead of the earnest inquirer, it admits of easy evasion, and may be made to conclude anything or nothing. The rule of Vincent is not of a mathematical or demonstrative character, but moral, and requires practical judgment and good sense to apply it. For instance, what is meant by being 'taught *always*?' Does it mean in every century, or every year, or every month? Does 'everywhere' mean in every country, or in every diocese? And does the '*consent of fathers*' require us to produce the direct testimony of every one of them? How many fathers, how many instances, constitute a fulfilment of the test proposed? It is, then, from the nature of the case, a condition which never can be satisfied as fully as it might have been; it admits of various and unequal application in various instances; and what degree of application is enough must be decided by the same principles which guide us in the conduct of life, which determine us in politics, or trade, or war, which lead us to accept revelation at all, for which we have but probability to show at most, nay, to believe in the existence of an intelligent Creator." Lectures, p. 69.



unanimously believed." That is, he likes the doctrines of those centuries, and therefore he believes. Here is the whole logic of tradition. This same writer says, our Saviour required the Pharisees to believe "on weak arguments and fanciful deductions;" and hence we have no right to complain if we are required to believe on the slight and fanciful evidence which traditionists can produce. He seems to have no conception of the infinite difference between the cases, which is no less than the difference between the authority of God and that of man. The Pharisees were required to believe on the authority of Christ: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him." To call the reasons proposed by such a teacher weak and fanciful, is in the highest degree irreverent. And to represent the Saviour as resting the whole authority of his doctrines on the exposition of certain passages of the Old Testament, is to misstate the fact. Christ showed the Jews that his doctrines were confirmed by their own scriptures; and his expositions of those scriptures were to be received, not only because they were in accordance with the principles of his opponents, but because of his authority as a teacher whose divine mission was fully established. The declaration of Christ is the strongest of all possible reasons as a ground of faith; and his testimony to the sense of scripture is the strongest of all possible grounds of assurance that such is its true sense. It is not, however, to the irreverence of the language referred to that we would call attention; it is to the implied admission that tradition can offer us nothing but weak reasons and fanciful deductions as a ground of belief, which the passage quoted contains. The uncertain teaching of tradition is admitted. It may, as Mr. Newman says, be made to conclude anything or nothing. But then, say the traditionists, we have no better ground of faith in anything. Our Saviour required his hearers to believe on weak reasons; we have only a probability to offer even for a divine revelation; three chances, so to say, for it, while there are two against it. The stream, says Mr. Keble, can never rise higher than the fountain; we have but historical tradition for the scriptures themselves, and of course nothing more for any of the doctrines which they contain; and we have the same historical tradition for catholic doctrines, i. e., for the oral teaching of the apostles. Every step of this argument is unsound. It is not true that we have nothing but historical tradition for the authority of scripture and of the doctrines they contain. Mr. Goode, in accordance, we had almost said, with all Christians, says, "It will not, I hope, be denied that a saving belief in scripture being the work of God, must be the work of the Spirit of God upon the heart; and that such a faith might be produced under that influence, even though the *external* evidence should be in itself weak and insufficient; and that such a faith is of the highest and most perfect kind, including all and more

than all, which can be produced by a faith wrought by the force of evidence alone; and that any other faith, as long as it stands alone, is, in fact, useless."\* No true Christian's faith rests exclusively or mainly upon historical tradition, but upon the testimony of the Spirit, by and with the truth upon the heart. And in the second place, it is not true that we have the same historical tradition for the oral teaching of the apostles, that we have for the authenticity of the scriptures. The historical tradition in the Church of England, in favour of the derivation of the Thirty-Nine Articles from the Reformers, is perfect and conclusive. No man ever has doubted the fact, or ever can doubt it. Though the evidence is of a different kind, no mathematical demonstration is more convincing. But the tradition of that church for any oral teaching of the Reformers, is absolutely null, it is nothing. In like manner the testimony of the church to the authenticity of the New Testament is as strong as historical testimony can be, while its testimony to the oral teaching of the apostles may be made "to conclude anything or nothing."

It is very clear that the men who remove our faith from the sure and stable foundation, and place it on one which is false and feeble, are in fact taking the best course to destroy faith altogether. The testimony of the scripture is true and trustworthy; the testimony of tradition, taken as a whole, is in the highest degree uncertain, unsatisfactory, and erroneous. This is so, and men cannot but find it out, and when required to believe on grounds which they see to be so unstable, they will either not believe at all, or they will commit themselves blindfold to the guidance of their priests. Infidelity, therefore, or blind, superstitious faith, is invariably attendant on tradition. Speaking in general terms, such is and ever has been its effect in the Romish Church. Those who think are infidels; those who do not, are blind and superstitious.

As it is the tendency and actual working of tradition to supersede the word of God, and to destroy the very foundation of faith, so it has never failed to introduce a system of false doctrines and of priestly tyranny. If you take men from the infallible teaching of God, and make them depend on the foolish teaching of men, the result cannot fail to be the adoption of error and heresy. This is a conclusion which all experience verifies. And as to ghostly domination, the result is no less natural and certain. The inalienable and inestimable right of private judgment, which is nothing else than the right to listen to the voice of God speaking in his word, is denied to us. We are told that we must not trust that voice; it is too indistinct; it says too little; and is too liable to lead us into error. We must hearken to tradition. When we ask, where is this tradition? we are told, in the church. When we ask further, which church? we are told, the catholic church. When we ask which church is catholic? we are told, that one whose

\* Vol. i., p. 59.

teachings and institutions can stand the test of antiquity, universality, and catholicity. When we say that this is a test exceedingly difficult to apply, requiring immense labour and research, and that it is exceedingly precarious, concluding "anything or nothing;" we receive two answers, one on rare occasions, which is absurdly inconsistent with the whole theory, and that is, that we must judge for ourselves; we must use our "common sense," and act as we do in "trade, politics or war;" take that for the true church, and that for the teaching of tradition, which we on the whole think most likely to be so. That is, although we are forbid to judge for ourselves what our blessed Lord means, when he says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out;" yet we are told to judge for ourselves, what all the Greek and Latin fathers mean; in what points they all agree; which of the conflicting councils were truly general, whether that in which three hundred bishops decided right, or that in which six hundred decided wrong. When we have done all this, then we may judge for ourselves, which is that true catholic church which is authorized to tell us what those things mean which are revealed even unto babes. As this is such a many-sided absurdity, we rarely hear this answer given. It is only when an unwonted sprightliness or levity leads the traditionist, as in the case of Mr. Newman, to strip the mask from the whole system of fraud and imposture.

It is so manifest an impossibility for the mass of ordinary Christians to apply the test of antiquity, universality, and catholicity, in order to decide which is the true church, and what tradition really teaches, that the inquirer is commonly simply told to "hear the church;" and as he cannot tell which church he ought to hear, he must hear the one that speaks to him, be it the Romish, the Greek, or the English. If the church within whose pale he happens to live, teaches him error, even fundamental error, he has no relief. He must submit his soul to his church; he must subject his heart, his conscience, and his life to her guidance, and wait until he enters eternity to find out whither she has led him. Still further, as every church speaks to its members mainly through the parish priest; as he is her organ of communication, the parish priest is to the great majority of Christians the ultimate arbiter of life and death. They must take his word for what is the true church, and for what that church teaches. Thus, what in sounding phrase is called the church catholic and apostolic, turns out in practice to be one poor priest. The Bible, Christ and God, are all put aside to make the soul depend on the fidelity and competency of one sinful, feeble man. Where tradition has its perfect work, there, in point of fact, the souls of the people are in the power of the priest, their faith and practice are subject to his control.

This same result is reached in another way. We have seen that it is virtually admitted by traditionists that their system cannot be



found in the scripture, nor in the first three centuries. We believe, say they, what the fifth century believed, and because the church of that age believed. The reason of this is obvious. Priestly power was not fully established before the fifth century. To find a system suited to their taste, they must come away from the Bible and from the early church, and turn to an age in which salvation was doled out for pence; when priestly excommunication was a sentence of death; when pardon, grace, and eternal life were granted or withheld at the option of the clergy; when the doctrines of episcopal grace, and sacramental religion, had subjected all classes of men and all departments of life to ghostly domination. We do not say that the modern traditionists love this system, merely or mainly because of the power it gives the clergy; but we say that the system which they love, has ever had, and from its nature must have, the effect of exalting the priesthood and of degrading the people.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. The men who read the Bible and hear there the voice of God, cannot but be free. It commands their assent and secures their homage. They cannot be subject to men in things whereof God has spoken. All the traditionists in the world cannot persuade them that the Bible is not the intelligible voice of God, or that there is either duty or safety in closing their ears to that voice, in order to listen to the mutterings of tradition. Our blessedness is to be free from men, that we may be subject to God; and we cannot be thus subject, without being thus free.

We have reason then still to assert and defend the position that the Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants; we want no other and we want no more. It is the rule of our faith. It is infallible, perspicuous, complete, and accessible. It is able to make us wise unto salvation; being inspired of God, it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. A better, surer rule than inspired scripture we cannot have; and it must stand alone, or fall. If men bring their torches around the pillar of fire, the sacred light goes out, and they are left to their own guidance; and then the blind lead the blind.



## ESSAY II.

# THE SONSHIP OF CHRIST.

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ONE of the most difficult points of knowledge is, to know how much may be known ; to decide where the limits are to be placed to the speculations of the inquisitive mind of man. Neither philosophers nor theologians have, in any age, observed these limits, and the consequence has been, that philosophy and theology, instead of being a systematic arrangement of the phenomena of the material and spiritual world, so far as they come within the range of our observation, or of the facts revealed in the word of God, are to so great an extent the useless and contradictory speculations of men on things beyond the reach of our feeble powers. These speculations, as it regards divine things, are so mixed and inwoven with the facts and principles contained in the sacred scriptures, that it is no easy task to determine, in every instance, what is revelation, and what is human philosophy. Yet, with respect to almost every doctrine of the Christian faith, this is a task which every sincere inquirer after truth is called upon to perform. The modes of conceiving of these doctrines, in different minds and in different ages, are so various, that it is evident at first view, that much is to be referred to the spirit of each particular age, and to the state of mind of every individual. The history of theology affords so much evidence of the truth of this remark, that it probably will not be called in question. It must not be supposed, however, that everything, either in philosophy or theology, is uncertain ; that the one and the other is an ever-changing mass of unstable speculations. There are in each fixed principles and facts, which, although frequently denied by men whose minds have so little *sense of truth*, that evidence does not produce conviction, have maintained, and will maintain, their hold on the minds and hearts of men. With regard to theology, the uniformity with which the great cardinal doctrines of our faith have been embraced is not less remarkable than the diversity which has prevailed in the mode of conceiving and explaining them. The fact, that there is one God, and that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are this God ; that there is such a distinction between the Father, Son, and Spirit, as to lay a sufficient ground for the reciprocal use

of the personal pronouns, has been the faith of the Christian church from first to last. And yet there is probably no one doctrine contained in scripture which has been so variously defined and explained as this. In the earlier ages of the church, when the religion of the gospel was glowing in the hearts of all the followers of Christ, when it was peculiarly a religion of feeling, it was not to be expected that this mysterious doctrine should be very accurately defined. To the early Christians, Jesus Christ was God; to him their prayers were directed, their praises given—in him all their confidence was reposed. In their preaching, sermons, and apologies, they presented God the Father, Son, and Spirit, as the great object of their worship,—as the Christian's God. It is true, that very early some few of the fathers, who had previously been speculative men, introduced their speculations into the doctrine of the Trinity, but this was far from being the prevalent character of this period. Irenaeus is a much better representative of this age than Justin Martyr, and we find him expostulating against the various attempts which had been made to explain the inexplicable mysteries of the Godhead. When religion had, in some measure, passed from the heart to the head; when the different modes of thinking and speaking on the subject of the Trinity, which had long prevailed, began to give rise to serious evils; and when opinions were adopted inconsistent with the great Bible-fact, which had previously been almost universally admitted; then a necessity arose for those in authority to state with more precision what was the faith of the church on this important point. That the modes of expression employed in their authoritative exposition of this doctrine were derived from the prevalent modes of thought of that age, and were intended to meet particular forms of error, may be readily admitted; while we maintain that the truth which they meant to convey was nothing more than the great fundamental doctrine of the Christian church. It need not be concealed, that the expressions which, in various ages, and by distinguished writers, have been employed on this subject, have often been infelicitous and improper; expressions which, if strictly interpreted and urged, would imply either Tritheism on the one hand, or Sabellianism on the other. While, at the same time, to the minds of those who used them, they implied only what all Christians recognise as the corner-stone of their faith. It is much to be lamented that so much animosity has been excited, and so much time and labour wasted on points of dispute, which arose from the imperfection of human language, or the weakness of the human mind. There has this good effect, however, resulted from these controversies, that the Church has been driven from one unguarded mode of expression to another, until it has come back to the simple statement of the word of God, and consented to leave the inexplicable unexplained. It is to be remarked, too, that this advantage has been derived mainly from the opposers of the doctrine in question. They have seen and exposed the difficulties attending the various definitions of the doc-

trine of the Trinity, and have falsely imagined, that in showing the inconsistency of a theological definition they have thereby refuted the doctrine itself. It would certainly be very unjust to accuse the modern defenders of the doctrine of the Trinity of having renounced the faith of the church, because in their statement of this article they abstain from the exceptionable or unintelligible terms which, in former times, have been employed to set it forth. The Bible-fact has ever been, and still is, by the great body of the Christian community, maintained and defended, although we have been taught to confine ourselves more closely to what the scriptures more immediately teach.

The same series of remark may be applied, with equal propriety, to the doctrine of the Sonship of Christ. With regard to this doctrine, even in a greater degree than the one just alluded to, it is true that the explanations and definitions of which it has been the subject have obscured the great truth meant to be taught. It may be stated, with the consent of the opposers of what is called the *eternal generation* of the Son, that in every age of the church the great body of Christians have believed that Christ is called the Son of God, on account of the relation existing between him as God and the first person of the Trinity. Whether this doctrine is taught in the word of God, is disputed; but that it has been the faith of the church, is admitted. In the early ages, it is not impossible that the ideas attached to the expression were more vague even than those which, from the nature of the case, are still entertained by those who maintain the common doctrine on this point. Christians were taught to believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and they were led to consider these terms as the appropriate names of the several persons of the Trinity as such. As soon, however, as men began to ask what was the nature of the relation indicated by these terms, we find the same variety of modes of thinking, and the same diversity of language, which have been exhibited in the explanation of most other leading doctrines of the Scriptures. In the first few centuries, almost every mode of explanation and illustration was adopted, which has ever been employed since. Some of the Fathers had recourse to the distinction between the Logos *ἐνδιάθετος*, and the Logos *προφορικὸς*. To what extent this philosophical theory prevailed in the church, it is not our object to inquire. We merely wish to note the diversity which obtained among those who all united in believing that Christ, as Logos, was the Son of God. Irenaeus objected to this and all other explanations of the doctrine, while he maintained the doctrine itself. What the nature of Christ's Sonship, or generation, was, he pretended not to say, and complained of those who did. "When any one asks us," he says, "how the Son is produced from the Father? we answer, no one knows. Since his generation is inexplicable, they who pretend to explain it know not what they say. That a word proceeds from the understanding everybody knows. What great discovery, then, is made by those who



apply what is familiar to every one, to the only begotten Word of God, and undertake to explain so definitely his incomprehensible generation.”\*

Origen's explanation was derived from the Platonic doctrine of the relation of the *νοῦς* to the *ὄν*, as the latter was always revealed in the former, so the Father is from eternity exhibited in the Son, as the effulgence of his glory. He maintained an eternal generation of the Son, but rejected every mode of expression, and every illustration borrowed from material objects, as utterly inconsistent with the spirituality of the Supreme Being. He objected to the expression, “generation from the divine essence” (*γέννησις ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Θεοῦ*), as implying that God was capable of division. Tertulian's mode of thinking was far less refined. “He could,” as Neander (*Kirchengeschichte*, p. 1035) says, “very well conceive, according to his emanation theory, how a being could emanate from the Godhead, possessed of the same substance, though in a less degree; just as a ray emanates from the sun. He maintained, therefore, one divine essence in three intimately united persons.” *Una substantia in tribus coherentibus*. And says of the Son, *Deus de Deo, modulo alter, non numero*.

The mode of explaining this doctrine, adopted by the Nicene fathers, is familiar to every one. “We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made,” &c. Since this period, this has been the general, though by no means the universal, method of speaking on this subject.

Amongst Protestant divines, there is a general coincidence as to the manner of explaining the generation of the Son of God. It is commonly defined to be, “an eternal and incomprehensible communication of the same numerical essence, from the Father to the Son.”† Not that the divine essence produces another divine essence, but the Father as a Person, communicates the same divine essence to the Son.‡ It will be seen at once, that this is not a simple statement of a Bible fact, but a philosophical explanation of what the scriptures are supposed to teach, viz., that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. This definition is founded almost exclusively on the idea of generation itself, and has arisen from urging unduly the analogy of the relation between Father and Son, among men, when applied to God. De Moor expressly says, we must consider the generation of Christ, as including all that is essential to the idea of generation; and as, among men, generation

\* *Adv. Haer.*, lib. ii., c. 28.

† *Aeterna et incomprehensibilis, ejusdem numero divinae essentiae communicatio a Patre facta Filio*. De Moor, *Com. in Markii Comp.*, tom. i., p. 742.

‡ *Generatio inquam Filii à Patre, non enim essentia gignit essentiam*—sed *Persona generat personam*. De Moor, *Commentarius in Joh. Markii Compendium*, *Theol. Christ.*, caput v., § 8.



is the communication of life, therefore, there must be a like communication in the case of the Son of God. (See De Moor, tom. i., p. 736.) This analogy, and the passage in John v. 26, in which the Father is said to have given the Son to have life in himself (which some of the advocates of this doctrine explain as referring to Christ in his divine nature), are almost the only grounds, as far as we know, for this particular view of the subject. It should be remarked, however, that the venerable men, who felt themselves constrained to present the doctrine in question, in this light, were very far from attaching any of those gross ideas to the phrase, "communication of the divine essence," which have been supposed to be necessarily included in it. They expressly state, in what sense they use the expression; that all ideas, inconsistent with the spirituality and infinite perfection of God, are to be excluded from it; and consequently, all idea of posteriority, dependence, or change. *Generatio, non nisi summa ὑπεροχῇ Deo tribuitur, ita omnes imperfectiones, quae finitam creaturarum generationem sequi solent, a generatione hac divina longissime sunt removendae, nimirum dependentia, successio, mutatio, divisio, multiplicatio, &c.* (De Moor, p. 736.) If it be said, that the ideas of posteriority, dependence, and mutability are necessarily included in this phrase, and that if these be denied, the very thing asserted is denied; the friends of this definition would say, that all such objections arise from transferring the gross ideas which we derive from sensible objects, to an infinite spirit. That it is just as impossible to conceive how the Father and Son should have the same divine essence, and yet remain distinct persons, as that this essence should be communicated from one to the other. And we are free to confess that if the *à priori* objections urged against this doctrine, are to be considered valid, we cannot see how we can consistently remain believers in God's omnipresence, eternity, or any other doctrine which is confessedly incomprehensible. We are not, however, the advocates of this definition, nor do we consider it as at all essential to the doctrine of Christ's divine and eternal Sonship. It has never secured the favour of many who are firm believers in this doctrine. Lampe, in his Commentary on John v., 26, expressly rejects the interpretation of the passage which is considered as the chief ground of this particular view of the Sonship of Christ. The life there said to be given to the Son cannot, he maintains, be referred to his divine nature; because such a gift would be inconsistent with his independence and necessary existence. He opposes, strenuously, the idea of any communication of essence, and yet declares, *se generationem Filii Dei naturalem, ad ipsam divinam essentiam pertinentem, unicam, aeternam absolute necessariam, sancte agnoscere, libere confiteri masculine assere.* (See Preface to vol. iii. of his Commentary.) It is true that Lampe, by many of his brethren, was blamed for taking this course, and they accused him of thus committing an "atrocious injury" on the cause of orthodoxy. This, however, does not alter the case, nor

affect the correctness of our position, that the doctrine of Christ's divine Sonship does not consist in this idea of the communication of essence. The same view of John v. 26, as that presented by Lampe, had been given before, by Calvin, Beza, and many others.

Morus, in his *Commentarius Exegeticus in suam Theol. Christ. Epitomen*, tom. i., p. 256, would explain the doctrine thus: *Filius per Patrem est, et talis, qualis est, per Patrem est*; which in the language of the church, would be, *Filius natus est ex Patre*, and in philosophical language, *Pater cum Filio essentiam communicavit*. On page 249, and seq., when speaking of the appellation *υἱος τοῦ Θεοῦ* as applied to Christ, he says, *Significatus dogmaticus nominis υἱος τοῦ Θεοῦ huc redit; æqualis Deo, qui habet eandem naturam; eadem attributa, eadem opera, quæ Pater*. Such passages as John v. 26, Matthew xxviii. 18, and John xvii. 2, in which life, power, and ability to save, are said to be given to the Son, he understands, not as referring to Christ as Mediator, but as God, and consequently as affording ground for the statement, that the Son has what he has, and is what he is, through the Father. He appears to lay no stress upon the philosophical definition of the Sonship, so often mentioned; but says that we should tell the people, that when they hear the word generation used in reference to Christ, they should think that the Son is even as the Father, has the same essence and the same attributes; that he can and does do whatever the Father does. Only the Son is through the Father.

Knapp, in his *Vorlesungen über die Christliche Glaubenslehre Erster Theil*, p. 214, in speaking of the sense in which God is called the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after stating that the expression sometimes refers to the relation which Jesus, as the Saviour of men, sustains to the Father, says that "it undeniably refers, in several passages, to a certain internal relation in the Godhead, of the Godhead of Jesus to the Godhead of the Father; the real nature of which, however, the Bible has nowhere clearly explained, and which indeed must be incomprehensible to men. Only the Son, says he, has all from the Father, although he makes himself equal with God." In like manner he maintains that the name *υἱος τοῦ Θεοῦ* in Rom. i. 3, 4, John v. 17, John i., and Heb. i., unquestionably refers to the divine nature of Christ. The name, Son of God, he says, should only awaken in us the idea of the participation of Christ in the divine essence—that he is of the same nature with the Father, even as, among men, a son is of the same nature with his parent.

Zachariä, in his *Biblische Theologie*, Göttingen, 1775, vol. i., p. 503, gives, as the result of his examination of the scriptural doctrine of the Sonship of Christ, in substance the following statement. There is in God himself, that is, in the divine essence, an internal relation which has some similarity to the relation between father and son among men. This follows from the names father and son, if these names refer, as in his opinion they do, to the first and second persons in the Trinity as such, and are founded on

their relation the one to the other. This relation includes the idea of the sameness of nature, and this is the only idea essential to it. Everything else included in it, being merely human, cannot be transferred to God. The Son, therefore, must have the divine nature because the Father has it, or in other words, there must be a certain relation, in virtue of which the Son is a partaker of the divine nature or essence. A nearer or more definite explanation of the nature of this relation between the Father and the Son, cannot be given, on account of our limited knowledge of the divine Being; or because there is nothing analogous to it among men. And at best our analogical knowledge of God extends but a little way. This relation must have existed from eternity, and is therefore a necessary and unchanging relation.

The idea of generation, strictly speaking, considered as an internal act of the Father, by which he confers the distinct character of Son on the second person in the Trinity, is neither in his opinion taught in the scriptures nor essential to the doctrine of Christ's divine and eternal Sonship.

We think that it must be admitted, that the essence of the doctrine under consideration is something different from any, or all of the various definitions of which it has been the subject. The revealed fact, as we believe, is that Christ, in his divine nature, is the Son of God. That this implies that there is some ground in the nature of the relation of the Father and Son, for the application of these relative terms, will hardly be questioned. But *what* the nature of this relation is, the scriptures have not revealed, and we therefore cannot undertake to decide. It will not be denied, that much evil has been produced, by the attempt to reduce to distinct formulas the general truths of the Bible, nor that many have been led to reject this, as well as other doctrines of the word of God, from the difficulties with which they conceived the definitions of them to be incumbered. Calvin long ago exclaimed, *Utinam sepulta essent nomina (Trinitatis ὁμοουσιον, &c.) constaret modo hæc inter omnes fides, Patrem Filium et Spiritum Sanctum esse unum Deum: nec tamen aut Filium esse Patrem, aut Spiritum Filium; sed proprietate quadam distinctos.* (Inst. Christ., Lib. i., cap. 13, § 5.) It might, with equal propriety, be desired, that theologians had contented themselves with asserting the Bible fact on this subject, without attempting to decide whether Christ was the Son of God by emanation, communication of essence, or merely by oneness of nature.

A mere statement of the principal *à priori* objections to the divine Sonship of the Redeemer, will be sufficient to show, that they are all directed against the idea of derivation of the second person in the Trinity from the first, and consequently that they bear not against the doctrine itself, but against some few of the forms in which it has been exhibited. We shall mention the principal of these objections, as they are given in substance, in Roell's *Dissertatio de generatione Filii Dei*, as they are the same which have



been presented both before and since. It is said that the doctrine contains a contradiction in terms, that it is utterly incomprehensible how the divine essence can be communicated to the Son, and yet retained by the Father.\* That this objection is directed to the idea of communication of essence, its very terms imply. And that it is valid, may be admitted, if the word communication is to be taken in a physical sense. But those who employ this term, tell us that this is not the sense in which they use it; that being applied to a spiritual being, it is absurd to speak of whole and part, as though God were capable of division; and that if it be allowable to demand *how* the divine essence can be communicated from the Father to the Son, and yet retained by the Father, the objector must submit to a similar demand, *how* three distinct persons can have the same numerical essence? *how* God can be in heaven and on earth at the same time, and yet not partly in the one and partly in the other? It is evident, that when we speak thus, we use words nearly without meaning; human language is so little adapted to the things of God, and our knowledge is so limited, that we may be said not to know what we say, nor whereof we affirm. When speaking of God's essence, his omnipresence, his unsuccessive eternal existence, or mode of subsistence, our ideas are at best merely negative. We endeavour to deny everything inconsistent with absolute perfection, but we are unable to state affirmatively, what we mean by any of these terms. Frequently, as the distinction between the *ὄν* and the *πῶς* is upon our lips, we are constantly disposed to forget it. Nor do we feel as we ought how infinitely such subjects are beyond our reach.

A second objection is, that the doctrine in question is inconsistent with the eternity of the divine nature of Christ, since, from the nature of the case, the Father must be prior to the Son.† And thirdly, it is objected that it necessarily involves a denial of the independence and self-existence of the Son.‡ These objections amount to the same thing, that this doctrine is inconsistent with the proper deity of the Son of God. Now whether this is so or not, it should be recollected that the uncaused, self-existent, independent divinity of Christ, is as strongly asserted by the advocates of this doctrine, as it is by any class of theologians whatever. It is true that some of the Fathers used language apparently inconsistent with this statement. But even Bishop Bull objects to calling the Son and Spirit (*αἰτιατός*) caused. Although he says he can conceive of a sense, in which the Son may be called an eternal and infinite effect of an eternal and infinite cause. Such lan-

\* Vel Pater totam Filio dedisset vitam, quando ipse eandem amisisset; vel partem essentiae divinae tantum, quando nec Pater nec Filius eam possideret. See De Moor, caput v.

† Si generatio illi tribuatur qui cum conscientia operatur, ut enti mere rationali, vel ratione saltem praedito, voluntarius sit oportet generandi actus. Ex quibus apertum est, in ejusmodi proprie dicta generatione generatum esse genito priorem.

‡ Quis non hoc per se intelligit,—id omne quod et quatenus genitum est, eatenus dependere a generante, tanquam effectum a causa.



guage, however, has never been adopted by the great mass of believers in the eternal generation of the Son of God. It is impossible to express in stronger language, faith in the uncaused, self-existent, and independent deity of Christ, than has been done by these men. Calvin, Beza, Mark, De Moor, and as far as we know, Protestant divines generally, teach that Christ is properly called *αὐτοθεος*, Deus a se, and prove that it must be so, from the verity, supremacy, and independence of his Godhead. De Moor says (p. 772), *Si Filius sit verus Deus, est Deus independens: nam independentia est inter attributa Dei facile prima, atque ab essentia Dei inseparabilis.* See also Calvin's Theological Tracts, tom. 7, of his works, p. 672, where he maintains that the Son and Spirit not less than the Father are to be called *αὐτοθεος*. They further deny any kind of dependence of the Son on the Father, in reference to his divine nature, but maintain that the several persons in the Trinity are alike independent, of equal dignity and perfection. *Omnis igitur ὑπεροχὴ Patri supra Filium tributa, spectat non ad naturalem Patris et Filii subsistendi modum in se consideratum, sed ad redemptionis oeconomiam et munus mediatorium a Deo Filio voluntarie susceptum.* (De Moor, p. 721.) It must not be supposed, therefore, that it is the exclusive privilege of those who deny the Sonship of Christ, to regard their Redeemer as self-existent, uncaused, and independent,—nor that it is necessary to give up the self-existence of the Logos in order to believe that he is the Son of God. The only question is, whether the communication of the divine essence from the Father to the Son, be consistent with this belief in the self-existence and independence of the latter? We find the advocates of this definition, almost with one voice, asserting that it is; declaring that they associate no ideas with the phrase in question, inconsistent with these divine attributes; that it is as unreasonable to force upon them a meaning of the expression which they disclaim, as it is for Unitarians to assert that we are necessarily Tritheists in believing that there are three persons in the Godhead; that there is no more necessity for using the word “communication,” as applied to God, in its common sense, than there is for using the word person in the same sense when applied to God, as when applied to men; that the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of all such objections lies in pressing the analogy between divine and human things too far, and thinking and speaking of God as though he were material, or at least altogether such an one as ourselves. It is plain that if it be permitted to apply to God forms of expression in the same sense in which they are used among men, there is no one subject on which we may not be involved in contradiction and absurdity. We say that the Father and Son have the same numerical essence, and yet we say that the Son became incarnate, and the Father did not, that is, that the same numerical essence did and did not become incarnate. Is it not something worse than useless for us to speculate so confidently on subjects at such an infinite remove above our conceptions, and to avail ourselves with so

much confidence of the most dangerous of all arguments, the *reductio ad absurdum*, when applied to subjects like the present. We are, however, no advocates for the definition under consideration, not because we consider the *à priori* arguments against it as just and conclusive, but because we cannot find that it is founded on the clear statements of the word of God, and because we regard it as one of the vain attempts to bring down by formulas and definitions, the infinite mysteries of the Godhead, within the grasp of man's infant intellect. Still we think that it is much to be lamented that so many distinguished men should have been influenced, either in whole or in part, to reject the doctrine of Christ's divine Sonship, by objections, which, if of any weight at all, bear only on a philosophical formula for expressing the nature of the fact on which the doctrine is founded. It is still more to be regretted that they should have been led to use such harsh language as has at times been applied to this doctrine. That it is an "infinite" and "awful absurdity," even in its most objectionable form, would require stronger arguments than any which we have yet seen, to induce us to believe. Nor do we think, after all that has been written upon the subject, and the express denial on the part of its advocates of all ideas of derivation and dependence, that exclamations against the thought of "a derived Deity" are altogether candid or courteous. The idea that "this strange conceit" was derived from the Platonic or Gnostic Philosophy, is about as reasonable, as that the doctrine of the Trinity was derived from Plato, because the terms employed to set it forth, were borrowed from the new Platonic school. We have no objection to the rejection of all such terms, but do not let us reject with them the great Bible-fact upon which the whole Gospel rests. Let who will reject the explanation of Origen, Tertullian, or the Nicene fathers, of the divine Sonship of Christ, but let him seek some better reason than the faultiness of a definition, for rejecting the doctrine itself. We do not mean to intimate that these *à priori* objections are the only ones urged against the doctrine in question, but we verily believe that they are by far the most efficacious. For that any man can believe that a doctrine is "abhorrent to reason," and inconsistent with all just notions of the spirituality of God, and yet go with a perfectly unbiassed mind to see whether it be taught in a book which he regards as infallible, we deem a moral impossibility. And should he find it there, he would not and could not believe it. No man can believe what he deems to be absurd. He must either renounce his faith in the Scriptures, or explain away the passages in which such absurdity is taught.

We have been led to the consideration of this subject, from observing how frequently and strongly the divine Sonship of Christ is denied, and from noticing that the main objections to it are directed against a mode of presenting it neither essential to the doctrine itself, nor adopted by some of its ablest advocates. The question is a very simple one, Why is Christ called the Son of

God? Is this name given to him in reference to his divine nature, and founded on the relation which as God he sustains to the first Person in the Trinity, or are his incarnation, resurrection, exaltation, &c., the sole reasons for his being so called? Our object in the remainder of this article, is to show that there are passages in which the name, Son of God, is referred to the divine nature of Christ, or in which it necessarily involves the assumption or ascription of equality with God.

Our first argument is an *à priori* one, that *such has always been the faith of the church*. This may be regarded as unworthy of a Protestant, and some may revolt at the idea of an appeal to the authority of men as to the meaning of the word of God. We have, however, no intention of calling in question the right of private judgment. The argument is only one of presumption, and as such, is founded on the very first principle of Protestantism, viz. the perspicuity of the scriptures. We assume the fact (because it has often been admitted, and cannot with any plausibility be denied), that in all ages, the mass of intelligent readers of the Bible have believed that Christ, in his divine nature, is the Son of God, that the names, Father and Son, are applied to the first and second Persons in the Trinity, as expressive of their mutual relation as such. If this be so, then it affords a presumption, strong as proof, that such must be the obvious meaning of the word of God. For how is the supposition, that the mass of readers have always mistaken its meaning, to be reconciled with the favourite principle of Protestants, that the Bible is easy to be understood? We are unable to call to mind any one doctrine which has been thus generally received, by the great body of intelligent and pious Christians, as taught in the scriptures, which the scriptures do not really teach. The explanation of these doctrines may vary as the systems of philosophy and modes of thinking vary, but the doctrines themselves are retained; nor can they be rejected, without rejecting what we have the strongest of all reasons for regarding as the plain and obvious meaning of the word of God. We cannot see how the force of this argument is to be denied, without denying that the obvious meaning of scripture is its true meaning, which, after all our learning and laws of exegesis, is the sheet anchor of the church. By obvious meaning, is not to be understood, the import which at first view an individual would be disposed to assign to an isolated passage, but that sense which the general tenor of scripture, the logical connection, and constant comparison of analogous passages would naturally lead, and in fact have led the mass of Christians to adopt. This is the general way in which men form their opinions of what is taught in the word of God; and if this be not a safe and proper way, then must the scriptures be but little adapted for general instruction, and the bulk of the people must depend on what the learned shall tell them, of the things involving their eternal interests. These remarks, of course, apply only to those doctrines which are



so plainly taught, as to secure the assent of the great mass of the readers of the Bible. The results which are thus obtained, are in the great majority of instances, the same as those at which the learned exegete arrives after a laborious and scientific investigation. And when they differ, the presumption is in favour of the multitude, rather than of the learned individual. The ground of this presumption is, that the causes which operate upon the latter, to produce error of judgment, are peculiarly numerous and powerful. It is rare to see any commentator, even if his general theory of interpretation is correct, who does not carry some one principle to an inordinate length, or who is not unduly swayed by one species of evidence, to the neglect of others, of equal importance; giving, for example, opinions respecting the meaning of particular passages, on merely philological grounds, contradicted by the whole train of the argument and drift of the context. The writings of J. D. Michaelis afford many striking illustrations of this remark. A whole class of commentators, whose main principles of interpretation are perfectly correct, might be brought as examples, of pressing some favourite principle unduly. Thus, because the apostles were Jews, and used the same words and phrases which were common among their countrymen, these words and phrases are presumed to mean exactly as much, and no more, than they would do in the mouth of an ordinary Jew, as though there were no modification of their import to be expected, when used to express the peculiar doctrines and feelings of Christians. It is in this way Paulus, Rosenmüller, and to a certain extent, Morus, have rendered flat and powerless some of the most spiritual portions of the word of God.

We are clearly of the opinion, therefore, that far more respect is due to the clear common-sense view of scripture, that which commends itself to the judgment and pious feelings of the mass of Christian readers, than to the views of the learned few. This is the ground of the presumptive argument, which we have stated in favour of the divine Sonship of Christ. If it be a fact, that the readers of the scriptures have, as a body, been led to think that the name, Son of God, is applied to Christ in reference to his divine nature, there is a presumption in favour of the opinion, that the name is so applied, which it should require the strongest evidence to induce us to resist. To ascribe the prevalence of this opinion to the influence "of fathers, doctors, and framers of systematic divinity," is to have a strange notion of the relation of cause and effect. And to suppose that it could not stand a day before the light of "sacred philosophy," without this adventitious support, argues a forgetfulness of the fact, that it has stood its ground, amid the wreck of the whole fabric of scholastic terminology and divinity. That such men as Morus, Knapp, Flatt, and others, who will not be despised as deficient in philological knowledge, nor suspected of being held in the trammels of system, have re-



tained the doctrine in question, is a sufficient answer to such an assertion.

But we proceed now to the examination of a few of those passages, which seem to us clearly to teach that Jesus Christ, as to his divine nature, is the Son of God. And here we would remark, that it is not to be expected that a name or title, which so frequently occurs, should in every case be attended with circumstances, which enable us to decide with certainty what is the ground of its application; it is enough if some few passages of this kind occur: such a passage we consider Romans i. 3, 4.

Paul commences this Epistle with his usual assertion of his apostolical authority. He had been divinely appointed to preach the Gospel concerning the Son of God. "Who was, *indeed*, born of the seed of David, as to his human nature; *but* powerfully exhibited as the Son of God, as to his divine nature, by the resurrection from the dead."—τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα, τοῦ ἔρποντος υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει, κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγίων, ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν. That γενομένος ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ, means born of the race of David, will not be questioned, γεννασθαι and γενίσθαι being used precisely in the same sense: as Gal. iv. 4, γενομένος ἐκ γυναικὸς made or born of a woman. The first point to be established in justifying the interpretation given of this passage, is to fix the sense of κατὰ σάρκα. It need hardly be remarked, that the word σαρξ is used in such a variety of significations in scripture, that we must depend, in a great measure, on the context for its meaning in any particular passage. It is used for the flesh literally, for the body, for the body and soul united, for man, mankind, human nature, the corrupt principle in man, &c., &c. Hence κατὰ σάρκα may mean according to the flesh, in any one of these senses, which the context demands. The question here is, in what sense was Christ born of the family of David? the answer is κατὰ σάρκα as to his human nature, or, in so far as he was a man. The word is used in this sense, Acts ii. 30 (according to the received text), Rom. ix. 5. Philem. 16., &c. The word then admits this sense, and the context would seem to require it, since it is only as a man, or as to his human nature, that Christ can properly be said to be the Son of David. A comparison of this passage with Rom. ix. 5, will serve to confirm this interpretation. There, the apostle says, that Christ in one respect το κατὰ σάρκα was descended from the Fathers, while in another he was God over all, blessed for ever. That κατὰ σάρκα here, is correctly rendered—according to his human nature, or, as a man, is generally admitted, and the similarity of the passages would constrain us to take them in the same sense in both cases.

The corresponding clause in the antithesis, is κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγίων: as to his human nature, Christ is the son of David; as to his divine nature, the son of God. The grounds for this interpretation of this latter phrase are the following. 1. That the word πνεῦμα is the proper and scriptural designation for the divine Being, or na-

ture, as such. The word *ἀγιοσύνη*, which, by a very common Hebrew idiom, qualifies *πνεῦμα*, as an adjective, is used in the LXX. Ps. cxliv. 5, for *דְּכָר decus, majestas*; in Ps. xcv. 6, for *רֹחַ robur*, and in Ps. xcvi. 13, for *קִדְשׁ*, that is, it is a general term for that which is the object of admiration or veneration, and, therefore, *πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης* is majestic, glorious, or holy Spirit. The idea expressed by *πνεῦμα* is by the addition of this word exalted. It cannot be denied, therefore, that the proper import of the phrase is suited to express the divine nature. But 2d, the higher nature of Christ is elsewhere called *πνεῦμα*, as 1 Peter iii. 18, *θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκί, ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι*, which is thus rendered, in Robinson's Translation of Wahl's Lexicon, "subjected to calamity and death in his human nature, but enjoying perfect happiness and glory as to his spiritual nature." (See article *πνεῦμα*.) Wahl makes *πνεῦμα* as spoken of Christ, equivalent with *ὁ λόγος* as used in John i. 1. Perhaps 1 Tim. iii. 16, belongs here also. In 1 Cor. xv. 45, Christ is called *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν*, and in Heb. ix. 14, his divine nature *πνεῦμα αἰώνιον*. We shall have occasion to refer to these passages more particularly afterwards. 3d. The antithesis requires that *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης* should answer to *κατὰ σάρκα*. If the latter, therefore, be understood of his human nature, then the former must be understood of his higher or divine nature; if the one informs us in what respect he was the son of David, the other must inform us in what respect he was the son of God. This is so plain, that few critics have felt themselves authorized to interpret one of these phrases, in a way which destroys its correspondence with the other. Hence, the sense put upon *σαρξ* determines that which is given to *πνεῦμα*. Those who make the former mean *a low condition*, make the latter mean *an exalted one*. To this it may be objected, that this sense of the word *σαρξ*, does not so well suit the context, nor the form of expression (*κατὰ σάρκα*), as to the flesh: since it was not *as to a state* that Christ was the son of David. The use of the phrase also in Acts ii. 30, and Rom. ix. 5, is against this interpretation, and finally it would require us to give a very unusual, if not, an entirely unauthorized sense to the words *πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης*, viz. state of exaltation. We cannot find a single passage, either in the Old or New Testament, where *πνεῦμα* has this meaning. No such sense is assigned to it by Wahl, or Schleusner. Those passages which are adduced by the author of the article *Vom Wort πνεῦμα, wenn es von Christo gebraucht wird*; in Eichhorn's Repertorium, vol. ii., p. 1—24, are to us entirely unsatisfactory. The first is 1 Peter iv. 6, where the apostle is exhorting Christians to holiness, in view of a future judgment, and then refers them to the case of those who had already died, to whom the Gospel had been preached, so that (*ἵνα*) though they might be condemned of men (*σαρκί*) as to the body, yet through God they live (*πνεύματι*) as to the spirit. Here, from the opposition of *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα*, the latter can hardly have any other sense than the soul.

Though their bodies be dead, their spirits live. The second is 1 Peter iii. 18, *χριστὸς θανατωθεὶς σαρκί, ζωοποιηθεὶς πνεύματι*. Here the word *ζωοποιέω*, after the Hebrew *חַיָּה* may either mean, to preserve alive, continue in life, or, to render happy. Wahl takes it in the latter, Pott in the former sense. According to the first, the meaning of the passage is, Christ indeed was put to death as to the body (*σαρκί* dative as before), but continued in life as to the spirit (*πνεύματι*). For Wahl's view see above. The sense in which *πνευματι* is here taken, depends upon the view adopted of the following verse, *ἐν ᾧ* (i. e. *πνεύματι*), *καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασι πορευθεὶς, ἐκήρυνεν κ. τ. λ.* The spirit, therefore, here spoken of, is that in which Christ preached to the spirits in prison. If this preaching occurred before the flood, then is *πνεῦμα* his pre-existent nature, i. e., his divine nature. If it occurred immediately after his death, then *πνεῦμα* may be his human soul: but in neither case can it be his *exalted state*. The third passage is 1 Tim. iii. 16, where Christ is said to have been "manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, &c." That is, he was proved or shown to be just; to be all that he claimed to be, the Messiah, the Son of God. This was done *ἐν πνεύματι*; which may mean either, by the influences of the Spirit miraculous and ordinary, by which the claims of Christ were established; or it may mean his divine nature, the *πνεῦμα* which dwelt in him, and which was manifested in all his life and in all his works; and in and through which he was justified. To render *πνεῦμα* here, *his exalted state*, would be to make this clause tautological with *ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ*. Besides, it is inconsistent with the natural order of the particulars here specified by the apostle, according to which, the glorification of Christ follows his justification. In the passage, as commonly understood, everything is natural. The incarnation of Christ, the establishment of his claims as Messiah, his being seen and served of angels, preached and believed upon in the world, and his ascension to glory, follow each in natural arrangement. We have, therefore, no reason, and consequently no authority, for adopting so unusual a sense of the word *πνεῦμα* in this place. The only other passage is Heb. ix. 14, where Christ is said *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου* to have offered himself unto God. Though Storr in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 167, renders these words by "in dem Zustande einer ewigen Herrlichkeit," *in the state of eternal glory*; and although Professor Stuart, in the XVIIIth Excursus to his commentary on the Hebrews, inclines to the same view, we cannot think it correct for the following reasons. 1. We think the passages adduced, and which have been noticed above, are insufficient to prove that *πνεῦμα* is ever used in scripture, for the exalted or glorified state of Christ: and if not, then this interpretation of the word here, is contrary to the *usus loquendi*. 2. The sense given by the word in its ordinary acceptation, is perfectly good and suitable to the context. "If," says the apostle, "the blood of bulls and goats purified—how



much more the blood of Christ, who was endowed with an eternal spirit," i. e. was a divine Being. That *διὰ* may be taken in this sense, is admitted: it occurs frequently in this way, particularly in the writings of Paul—*διὰ γράμματος* having the written law, *διὰ περιτομῆς* with circumcision, &c. See Wahl's Lexicon under *δια*. 3. The words *εὐστον προσήνεγκεν* are descriptive of what occurred on earth, i. e. of Christ's sacrifice, see v. 25. and v. 28 of this chapter, and not of what was done in heaven. Besides, the point of the comparison is not between the different places, where the sacrifices of bulls and that of Christ were offered, but between the sacrifices themselves, and therefore *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου* must express the personal dignity of Christ; which it does in the strongest possible language. If the blood of animals was of the least value, what may we not expect from that, of a Being possessed of a divine nature?

As these are the only passages adduced to show that the word *πνεῦμα* may be rendered, *exalted state*, if these are insufficient, it will certainly not be contended that we are at liberty to give it that sense in the passage under consideration. To make it mean, *according to the revelations or predictions of the Holy Ghost*, as is done by Calvin, and more recently by Michaelis and Ammon, is so directly at variance with the structure of the passage, which requires us to make *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης* answer to *κατὰ σάρκα*, that this interpretation cannot be considered sound, and has, in fact, very few advocates. Nothing but the exigency of the case can authorize us to do violence to the rule, which governs the interpretation of antithetical passages. As no such exigency exists here, it evidently should not be departed from, especially as Paul, perhaps more than any other of the sacred writers, abounds in such passages, and depends most on his readers gathering his meaning by the aid of the mutual light afforded by the contrasted terms.

The only other ground for the interpretation given of the phrase in question, which we shall present, is the analogy between this passage and Rom. ix. 5. There the apostle, as before remarked, is speaking of Christ in a two-fold respect. According to the one, he is descended from the fathers, according to the other, he is God over all, blessed for ever. So here, in one respect, he is the Son of David; in another, the Son of God. As Son of David is equivalent with being descended from the Fathers, so is Son of God equivalent with God over all, blessed for ever.

We designedly passed over the word *ὁρισθεντος*, that we might be permitted to derive an argument from the interpretation, which we have endeavoured to show must be given to the words *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης* in favour of that given of *ὁρίζειν*. This word is properly *to fix the limits of anything, to define, &c.*, in the New Testament, *to appoint, constitute, determine, &c.* Accordingly, the most obvious meaning of *ὁρισθεντος υἱοῦ Θεοῦ* is *constituted the Son of God*. But it is familiar to every student of the scriptures, that it is very common to say of any person (or thing), that he is made that, which he is only pronounced or declared to be. Thus, to



make guilty, is to pronounce guilty ; to make just, is to pronounce just ; to make clean, is to declare clean ; and so in cases without number. See Storr's *Observationes ad Analogiam Heb.*, p. 14. Hence ὁρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ, in the strictest accordance with the usage of the Hebrew-Greek, *may* be rendered, *pronounced*, or *declared*, the Son of God. That it must be so rendered is, we think, clear from the following considerations : 1. Christ cannot be said to be constituted the Son of God, κατὰ πνεῖμα ἁγιοσύνης, if these words mean, as shown above, the divine nature. 2. It cannot be said, that he was constituted the Son of God, by or after his resurrection, as he was the Son of God before it. If this title is equivalent with Messiah, or king of Israel, still he was Messiah and king of Israel before his resurrection. And hence, even those, who make πνεῖμα here to mean exalted state, translate ὁρισθεὶς by *declaratus*.

There is another process by which the same sense may be shown to be expressed by the term, without having recourse to the familiar Hebraism above alluded to. Thus Morus says, ὀρίζω in communi vita est : *terminos pono*, nam ὅρος est *terminus*, lines, agrorum terminus. Iam metonymice ὀρίζειν in communi vita est, *confirmo aliquid, facio ut sit certum*.—Ita ὁρισθεὶς υἱός τοῦ Θεοῦ erit : der bestätigte Sohn Gottes, certo confirmatum est eum esse υἱόν τοῦ Θεοῦ. Yet Morus translates κατὰ πνεῖμα ἁγ. quoad statum suum excelsiorem. He cannot, therefore, be supposed to be biassed in his judgment as to the force of the word ὀρίζειν, by theological prepossessions. We shall not undertake to decide, whether the passages quoted from the common Greek authors, in support of this sense of ὀρίζειν by Elsner, are sufficient to prove the point, as the process by which Morus explains the term is so simple and satisfactory. Does not however the phrase ὀρίζειν τινα θεὸν more properly mean to declare or pronounce that one is a God, than to constitute one a God ?

Both Chrysostom and Theodoret (if further confirmation of this point be necessary), explain ὁρισθέντος by ἀποδειχθέντος. The Syriac gives it the same sense. The majority of modern critics, however they may differ in their expositions of other parts of this passage, agree here. So Koppe, *declaratus per resurrectionem filius Dei*. Flatt, für Gottes Sohn kräftig erklärt wurde ;—Tholuck—ist nun offenbar wurden als Gottes Sohn. And to the same effect, many others.

The words ἐν δυνάμει may either be connected adverbially with ὁρισθέντος, or adjectively with υἱός Θεοῦ. In the former case, the sense would be, was powerfully manifested as the Son of God : in the other, he was manifested as the powerful Son of God. This manifestation was ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν, either by the resurrection from the dead ; or after the resurrection, as εκ admits of either sense. In both cases the meaning is the same, it was the resurrection which was the great decisive evidence that Christ was all that he claimed to be, the Messiah, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world. It is in this light that the apostles were accustomed to speak of the resurrection of their Master. It was one important part of their

official duty to bear testimony to this fact. Hence, when Judas fell, they said, "one must be ordained to be a witness with us of his (Christ's) resurrection." It is recorded of them, that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Paul tells the Jews that the evidence that God had fulfilled the promise made to their Fathers, was that he had raised up Jesus. And in 1 Cor. xv., he makes all our hopes as Christians to depend upon the fact that Christ has risen from the dead. This was the final proof that he was the Son of God.

We have now given the grounds, on which we are constrained to believe that the passage before us contains an explicit declaration, that Christ in his divine nature is the Son of God. The view here given, is not only that which Beza and the older commentators had presented, but which such men as Flatt, Knapp, and others, who cannot be considered to be influenced by theological prepossessions, have adopted. The oftener we have examined the passage, the more thorough has been our conviction, that the interpretation given above is not only admissible, but that it is the only one which the text will consistently bear. And, therefore, we consider this passage decisive on the point at issue. For all that we have undertaken to prove, is, that Christ, as Logos, is called the Son of God; not that this title, in the mouths of Jews, Heathen, and evil Spirits, or even of the apostles, was uniformly used in a sense involving the ascription of true divinity.

We have endeavoured to show that the doctrine of the divine and eternal Sonship of Christ does not include the idea of derivation of the Logos from the Father; and, consequently, that the objections which proceed in the assumption, even admitting their force, are not conclusive. We remarked, that a distinction was to be made here, as in many other instances, between the fact as revealed in scripture and the explanations of its nature, as given in different ages and by different men. The simple point we wish to establish is, that the Logos is the Son of God. In support of this point, we referred to Romans i. 3 & 4, where, we think, it is expressly asserted, that Christ, as to his human nature, is the Son of David; but, as to his divine nature, was clearly exhibited to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead. Those of our readers who admit the correctness of the interpretation of this passage as here given, would demand no other proof of the position which we have assumed. For it is to be borne in mind that it is no part of our object to prove that the name, Son of God, is always used in direct reference to Christ's divine nature; or that it is always employed in a sense implying equality with God. Our object is merely to show that Christ as God is called Son; and for this purpose we will now advert to some other passages.

These are principally in the writings of the Apostle John. And here it may be well to remark, that if any expression be susceptible of two interpretations, the one of more, the other of less depth and tenderness of meaning, the presumption is greatly in favour of the former, when used by this apostle. There is something in the

whole manner in which the beloved disciple speaks of his divine Master ; of his relation to the Father as his Son ; of the intimate union between them as such, and in his use of the phrase Son of God, which must impress every unbiassed reader with the conviction that it is a mysterious and inscrutable relation, which he endeavors to shadow forth by this expression. It is difficult distinctly to exhibit this kind of evidence, consisting, as it does, in the general spirit and manner of an author ; yet every one will probably feel it. We are sensible that the full meaning of the apostle is not reached, by paraphrasing. Son of God, King of Israel, or the man miraculously begotten. Such expositions substitute a distinct, intellectual conception for a vague but elevated impression ; and we are conscious of being great losers by the exchange. We feel this when we hear the unity, which John makes his Master assert to exist between himself and his Father, explained as mere coincidence of purpose or will. If we could not prove it to be otherwise, we should still believe that this was not all that was intended. The characteristic of this apostle, to which we are now alluding, has been felt by all commentators who have any congeniality of spirit with the sacred writer. Those of a different description have either reduced to the coldest and flattest sense everything in this Gospel, or questioned its genuineness altogether. There is great force in the remark made (we think) by Storr, that nothing betrays such an utter destitution of all proper feeling for the true spirit of Christianity as these sceptical doubts and low interpretations of the writings of St. John. We think our readers will admit that there is at least a presumption in favour of St. John's meaning something more by Son of God, than King of Israel. That this is really the case, we hope the following passages will prove.

The first is in these words : “ Ο λόγος σαρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν (καὶ ἰθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρὸς), πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. John i. 14. The Logos, full of grace and truth, became incarnate, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, a glory that became the only begotten of the Father.

It seems natural, as *πλήρης* is in the nominative, to make it the predicate. *λόγος*, and to consider the words included in the brackets as parenthetical. Grotius, Tittmann, and others, connect it with *μονογενοῦς* ; then *πλήρης* is by enallage for *πληρὺς*. A similar instance may be seen in Revelations i. 5 : ἀπὸ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς. Still, as in the Gospel of St. John, such departures from the usual grammatical construction are rare, we prefer the common method of explaining the passage.

The *ὡς* before *μονογενοῦς* is not a sign of comparison, but is used as the *veritatis*, in Hebrew. Hesychius explains *ὡς* by *ἀληθως*. This interpretation has been adopted in this instance by almost all commentators from the time of Chrysostom. “ We saw his glory, the glory truly, of the only begotten of the Father.” Or it is equivalent with *ut decet*. Tittmann paraphrases the passage thus : *Vidimus majestatem ejus, dignam Filio Dei. Gloriam talem et tantam,*



qualis et quanta nonnisi Filii Dei esse potest. He gives from Chrysostom, as an illustration, the common expression, He walks as a King; that is, as becomes a King.

The word *δόξα* is here to be taken for all the perfections of the Logos; and if the Logos is God, as John asserts in the first verse, then *δόξα* is the sum of the divine excellence. It is in this sense that *כבוד* is very frequently used in the Old Testament. It expresses all God's perfections as manifested to his creatures. The word is here, therefore, not to be restricted to the display of divine power made in the miracles of Christ, or to the exhibition of his glory in his transfiguration; but the apostle means to say, that he had seen a fulness of excellence, wisdom and power, in Christ, that could belong to no creature.

*Μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρὸς.* It seems hardly necessary to remark, that *εἶς* is to be supplied after the first word in this phrase, as this is so evident from the import of the word *μονογενής* itself, and from the fact that John so frequently uses the full phrase, "only begotten Son," as chap. iii. 16, and elsewhere. As no part of our argument from this passage rests on the meaning of the word *μονογενής* (if *εἶς* be supplied), we might admit that it may be translated "only" or "beloved." We would remark, however, that the reasons commonly assigned for giving it the second sense just mentioned, appear to us very unsatisfactory. It very often happens, it is true, that, in compounds, their strict etymological sense is in common usage neglected or considerably modified. And this is, no doubt, so far the case with the word before us, that the idea expressed by the first part of the word is sometimes mainly or solely retained, as in Psalm xxv. 16, where it is used for *μονος*; hence *μονογενής υἱός* is, in the scriptures at least, an only son, whether an only surviving or only begotten son, or the only son by the same mother. It is in this sense that it corresponds to the Hebrew word *יחיד* *alone, only*. That this Hebrew word is sometimes translated in the LXX. by *ἀγαπητός*, does not prove that *μονογενής* and *ἀγαπητός* are synonymous, but merely that *יחיד* is sometimes taken in the sense of the one, and sometimes in that of the other, of these Greek words. We are inclined, therefore, to think that *μονογενής* as applied to Christ, can only, with propriety, be rendered *unigenitus* or *unicus*; i. e., *unus in suo genere*.\* It matters not, however, for our purpose, how this word is rendered. Christ is the *μονογενής παρὰ πατρὸς*,

\* As to the classical use of this word, which is, indeed, of less weight in the present instance, it may be well to quote part of a note given by Lücke in his Comment, page 122, from Prof. Näke, of Bonn. "From the earliest Grecian poets, in philosophical language (as in Plato's *Timæus*), to the writers in the time of the Emperors, of different centuries, after Christ, *μονογενής* retained its full meaning; *μῦθος γενομενός* or *μῦθος γεγονώς*; for example, *μονογενής παῖς* (in Hesiod and later writers), *the only son*, that is, *the only son born to its parents*, so that the only surviving son of two or more cannot be called *μονογενής*. The only departure from the usual sense of the word, he says, is found in its application to Minerva, *born of only one parent*." This, however, relates to the first, and not to the second, part of the compound.



the Son, unus in suo genere, such as no other being in the universe is; and is so called in distinction from the υἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ or τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ. He is the only son, in the sense in which the apostle uses the expression. This, of course, does not decide in what sense he is thus peculiarly the Son of God; and, therefore, we lay no stress on the use of this particular word, except so far as it expresses the idea just mentioned.

Any one, who will throw his eyes on the passage under consideration, will see that the words παρὰ πατρός are much more naturally connected with μονογενοῦς than with δόξαν. According to the latter method of construction, the sense would be, We saw his glory, a glory (δοθεῖσαν) given by the Father; so Erasmus and Grotius. This is unnecessary and forced. Those, however, who connect them with μονογενοῦς, explain the phrase variously. Beza supplies ἐξελθόντος, others ὄντος; but neither is necessary. Noesselt (Opuscula Fasciculus. ii., p. 179) translates παρὰ πατρὸς, *apud Patrem*; majestatem tanquam unici filii, *qui erat apud Patrem*. This gives a sense well suited to the analogous passages, v. 1. and v. 18; but it would seem that παρὰ, in this sense, would require the dative or accusative. It is better, therefore, to take παρὰ πατρός for the simple genitive, as may, with strictest propriety, be done; see Rom. xi. 27. ἡ παρ' ἡμῶν διαθήκη for διαθήκη μου.

The whole question to our purpose, as it regards this passage, is, who is the μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός? We think the Λόγος is such. This appears clearly from the passage itself. The Logos became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory; that is, the glory of the Logos, which was as of the only begotten of the Father. The meaning is, we saw a glory which could belong to no other being than the Logos, who is God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. It seems evident that John uses the words λόγος and μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός in the same sense, exchanging the one expression for the other; and, if this is the case, then is the Logos the Son of God.

A reference to the context will make this still more obvious, and will show that no relief is obtained by saying that it is only the Logos as incarnate that is called the Son of God.\* The apostle's object is, to set forth the true nature of Christ. He, therefore,

\* If this were the case, it could not be on account of the miraculous conception of the human nature of Christ that he is here called the Son of God; for the incarnation of the Logos, and the miraculous production of Christ's human nature, are two very different things. Another reason, therefore, beyond those usually assigned for the application of this name, must, in this case, be assumed, viz., the union of the divine with the human nature; or, as Storr, in his note on Hebrews, i. 5, expresses it, "Because he, who, before all things, was with the Father, and in his bosom, became man; or, because he, who, before the foundation of the world, was the beloved of the Father, God's dear Son, has united himself in one person, with the miraculously-conceived man Jesus." Weil der, am Anfange der Dinge bei (John i. 1), dem Vater (1 John, i. 2), in seinem Schoos war (John i. 18), Mensch worden ist, oder weil sich der von dem Vater (17, i. 5), vor dem Daseyn der Welt Geliebte (v. 21.)—der liebe Sohn Gottee—mit dem übernatürlicher Weise empfangenen Jesu zu Einer Person verbunden hat.

says, that the Logos was in the beginning with God, and was God, the creator of all things, the source of all light, and the fountain of life. This divine Being became man, and we (the apostles) saw, even under this veil, the glory of the Godhead, of the Logos, for it was such as could belong to none other than the only begotten of the Father; i. e., to one who was partaker of the divine nature and attributes. We think nothing can be clearer than that John interchanges λόγος and μονογενής παρὰ πατρὸς, and, consequently, calls the Logos the Son of God, which is all that we are contending for. We think that it is also clear, from this passage, that John intends, by the name Son of God (or, which is the same, only begotten of the Father), one who is of the same nature with the Father; not one who is derived from him, nor exalted by him, but one who is what he is, knows what he knows, and does what he does; one who stands in the most intimate of all relations to him. We shall have occasion to refer to some passages, in which Christ evidently uses this name in the same sense.

If authority was of any weight with our readers, we might quote the opinions of critics of every description to prove that the Logos is here called the only begotten of the Father. The opinion of the older, though not on that account less estimable, commentators would probably be set down to the score of theological prejudice. We shall, therefore, only remark, that the view of this passage given above is presented by almost all the German critics of any note with whom we are acquainted. Kuinoel, on this verse, after explaining μονογενής *cui nemo par, nec Deo carior*, remarks: "Respexit vero etiam Johannes sublimiorem Christi naturam, interiorē τοῦ Λογοῦ a Deo prognati, cum Deo conjunctionem." Lücke, now Professor in Göttingen, after speaking, in no very measured terms, in reference to the modern interpretations of the word μονογενής, and quoting from Hermann a cutting reproach against the recent theologians for their numerous perversions of the language of scripture, says, that all that Paulus, in his commentary, has said to show that μονογενής means *unique* (einzig in seiner Art), at most proves that it *can* be so rendered; but that this is nothing to the purpose, until he proves, from the usage of the New Testament, that "when applied to Christ, to the Logos, to the Son of God," it does not contain the idea of sonship. See his *Comment. über die Schriften des Evangelisten Johannes*, vol. i., p. 420, et seq. Tittmann, in his remarks on this verse, after stating that some would refer the name, Son of God, to the office, and not to the nature of Christ; to his mission, and not to his union in nature with the Father; and thus make it equivalent with Messiah, says: *Verum hæc interpretatio est haud dubie alienissima a mente Apostolorum et Domini ipsius.* And, as the conclusion of his argument on this subject, adds, *Igitur υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, isque μονογενής, est Filius Dei in suo genere unus, quatenus talis est, qualis est Pater, idem est, qui Pater, eadem habet, quæ Pater, eadem facit quæ Pater, cui eadem competunt, quæ Patri.* See his *Meletemata Sacra*, p. 59,

seq. Tholuck, although his manner of speaking on this particular passage is undecided, yet, on John ix. 35, says expressly, that the phrase, Son of God, is used in a higher and lower sense in the New Testament. On the one hand, it denotes the divine nature in Christ, the Logos (einerseits bezeichnet es das Göttliche in Christo, den Logos); and, in the other, is a name of the Messiah. In proof of the first point, he refers to the passage before us, and, of course, understands it as it has just been explained. So also Knapp, as before quoted, appeals to this passage to prove that Christ, in his divine nature, is the Son of God. And even Paulus, who, of all commentators with whom we are acquainted, has laboured hardest to remove everything miraculous or mysterious, and, in fact, everything elevated and characteristic from the sacred writings, considers John as here calling the Logos the *μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός*. The Logos, he says, in the theology of the Alexandrian Jews, was a Spirit sui generis, which had proceeded from the Eternal Father; and, accordingly, the sense of this passage is: "The more closely we could observe Jesus, the more did we see that all his excellent attributes were like the excellence of a Spirit sui generis, that had proceeded from God."\* From this, it is clear that the *μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρός* is, in his opinion, the Logos, whatever may be thought of his view of the passage in other respects. Our object in making these quotations is merely to show that it is a mistake to suppose that the divine Sonship of Christ is an antiquated notion, believed only by those who are held fast in the trammels of obsolete systems.

There is another passage in this chapter, which we think is equally clear in proof of our position, that the Logos is the Son of God, and that is the 18th verse: Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακε πώποτε ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός, ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο. The diversity of reading which exists as to the second clause of this verse, some MSS. having *μονογενὴς υἱός*, others *μονογενὴς Θεός* (and so, many of the Fathers), others *θεοῦ*, and others *υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ*, does not affect the force of the passage, as far as our purpose is concerned; since *μονογενὴς* is retained in all, and *υἱός*, if not expressed, is implied. In the words ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον, the accusative with *εἰς* is probably to be taken for the dative with *ἐν*, as is frequently the case in the New Testament Greek. The ὁ ὢν is by Erasmus, Bengel, Tittmann and many others, taken for *ὅς ἦν*, "who was in the bosom of the Father," agreeably to the frequent use of Hebrew participles. There is, however, no necessity of departing from the common use of the present, either here, or in iii. 13 (ὁ υἱός τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ). The intimate relation expressed by the figurative expression, "in the bosom of the Father," is a perpetual and unchanging relation. The Apostle had said, v. 17, that the Law came by Moses, but grace and truth through Jesus Christ;

\* So war der Gott-Logos in der jud. alex., Theologie ein aus dem ewigen Vater hervorgegangener, ganz einziger Geist ohne seinesgleichen. Sinn: je genauer wir Jesus beobachten konnten, desto mehr war uns der Umfang all seiner vortrefflichen Eigenschaften der Vortrefflichkeit eines in seiner Art einzigen, von Gott hergekommenen Geistes gleich. See Commentar über das neue Testament.



and then in the 18th, states how it is that the most precious revelation of the divine character and purpose, came to be made by him. No other has ever seen God, or has that knowledge of his being and counsels, which was possessed by Jesus Christ. The only begotten Son, who sustains the most intimate of all relations to the Father, he has revealed him and his purposes. Or (as others would supply after *ἐξηγήσατο, τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν*), has revealed his grace and truth. The Son is the divine Exegete (*ἐξηγητὴς*) of the Father, his Word, the Logos.

We are aware, that no decisive argument can be derived from this passage, taken by itself, to prove that the Logos is called the Son of God. We know, that even if the words *μονογενὴς υἱός* primarily and properly designated the human nature of Christ, they might be used for the whole person of the Redeemer, as is the case with the name, Son of man, as used in John iii. 13, just quoted. But still we think that the context affords clear evidence that John here intended to designate, by these words, the divine nature that became incarnate. For, in the first place, his object renders such an interpretation peculiarly appropriate. He designs to tell us, why the revelation made by the Redeemer was so superior to any that preceded it. No man had ever seen God, but the Son, who now and ever exists in the most intimate union with him, who knows all the purposes of the Father, has appeared on earth in human form, and made them clearly known. Secondly, it should be recollected, that from the 1st to the 18th verse inclusive, is one continued discourse on the dignity of Christ. These verses constitute the prologue to the whole Gospel, and are intimately connected. It is not probable, therefore, that the same expression should occur in two different senses in so short a passage. Hence, if John, in verse 14th, calls the Logos the *μονογενὴς παρὰ πατρὸς*, we may infer with confidence that the Logos is intended by the *μονογενὴς υἱός* in the 18th verse. No man hath seen God, but the Logos, the only begotten Son, he has seen him, and sustains the most intimate of all relations to him. He therefore can reveal his purposes fully. A third reason for this interpretation is, the striking analogy between this and the first verse of this chapter. There it is said, "The Logos was with God," and here, "The only begotten Son, who is (or was) in the bosom of the Father." The same idea is expressed by the words, "with God," as is intended by being "in the bosom of the Father." They both express intimate relationship, or union. In the one case, this union is said to be between the Logos and God; in the other, between the Son and Father. This analogy between the two passages, taken in connection with the 14th v., where the terms Logos and only begotten of the Father are evidently interchanged, we think prove that John intended to designate the divine nature of Christ, by the words *μονογενὴς υἱός*.

In John v. 17, we find another instance in which Christ is called, Son of God, in reference to his divine nature; or, what amounts to

the same thing, in which he calls God his Father, in a sense which implies participation of the same nature. This passage is the more interesting, as it contains our Saviour's own words, and gives us his own exposition of what is to be understood by his being the Son of God.

In the former part of the chapter, the Evangelist relates the circumstance of Christ's healing a man on the sabbath, whom he commanded to take up his bed and walk. The Jews persecuted him for this supposed violation of the sabbath. The word is *ἰδίωκον*, and may mean, "they prosecuted" him, brought him before the Sanhedrim. Jesus defended himself against this charge, by saying, v. 17, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." That is, "as my Father is constantly active, exercising on the sabbath, as on other days, his power for the good of his creatures, so I have authority to dispense blessings on this as on any other day." If this be the meaning of this passage, then it is plain that Christ calls God his Father, or himself the Son of God, in a sense which implies that he is equal with God. That this interpretation is correct, and consequently that the argument derived from it is valid, we think will appear from the following considerations.

First, the Jews so understood the declaration of Christ. They were therefore not content with what they had already done, but they moreover sought to kill him; not only because he had broken the sabbath, but because he had called God his Father, in a sense which made him equal with God. (*ἵσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ*) If the meaning thus put upon his words was not correct, it would seem that Christ would not, and could not with any propriety, suffer so serious a perversion of them to pass without correction. Does Christ, then, tell the Jews that they had misunderstood him; that he did not intend to call God his father, in any sense which involved the claim of equality with him? By no means, but directly the reverse; and this is the second consideration in favour of the view given of the 17th verse.

Instead of correcting any misapprehension of his meaning, he goes on to declare, that the union between the Father and Son was such, that all the Father did, he did, and that all he did, the Father did; that he never acted nor could act otherwise than in union with the Father. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."\* The meaning of this verse becomes perfectly plain from what follows; for Christ immediately proceeds to show, that he has the same power and authority with the Father, and consequently is entitled to the same homage. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the

\* The *οὐ δύναται* may be taken here in its strictest sense. Such is the union between the Father and Son, that the Son can do nothing *ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ* of himself alone, out of connection with the Father.

Son; that all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that hath sent him." Here is surely a claim to divine power, authority, and homage. So far, therefore, is our blessed Saviour from correcting the interpretation given to his words by the Jews, that it seems to be his very object to prove that he is, in a proper sense, the Son of God; that is, in such a sense, that he has the same nature with the Father. The plain meaning of this passage, therefore, is, "I have a right to labour on the sabbath, for my Father does it. He has not remained inactive from the creation, but works until now." The Jews reply, "Then God is your Father in such a sense, that you are equal with God." "So I am. I act in union with him, what he does I do. As he raises the dead, so do I, and execute judgment, and am entitled to equal honour; so that he who denies me this honour, does thereby refuse to honour the Father. For (as he elsewhere says), I and the Father are one. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also." See c. xii., 45.

We think that it is clear, from this passage, that Christ calls God his Father, not because he had miraculously called his human nature into existence, nor because he had sent him into the world, nor because he had made him his Son (or a king), but because he was partaker of the same divine nature and attributes. If this be so, then is Christ the Son of God, in a far higher sense than merely as Mediatorial King.

It is not at all necessary to our argument, that we should prove that the term Son, throughout this interesting passage, is applied exclusively to Christ's divine nature. The whole argument is founded on the 17th v., as explained by those which follow it. God is the Father of Christ. In what sense? In a sense which includes equality. So the Jews understood our Saviour, and so he clearly explained his meaning. This is the argument. It is no objection that the word Son is used immediately after, for the whole person of the Redeemer; as in v. 20. The Father loveth the Son; i. e. that complex person, who is his Son, and who, being such, though at the same time a man, has the right and ability to do whatever the Father does. This person, thus constituted (Son of God and Son of man), acts in obedience to the Father. He does nothing without the Father's direction, co-operation, and consent. Hence the Father (*πάντα δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ*) exhibits and marks out all things for him. Hence, too, it is said, that the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, i. e. to that individual who is his Son. Thus, v. 26, it is said, the Father hath given the Son to have life in himself. Here again, Son, is the name of the whole person. Life, is here divine power, a vital life-giving principle; and the meaning is, God has so constituted the Redeemer's person, that he possesses all the divine life-giving power of the Father. (Or, as the same idea is expressed in Colossians i. 19. It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness (*πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα*) dwell. What that fulness is, we learn from the next chapter, it is *πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς*



θεότητος, all the fulness of the Godhead). And having thus constituted his person, and given him this life, he has given him (this person, not the Son, as such) authority to execute judgment (to hold the general judgment), because he is the Son of man, i. e. the Messiah. It pleased God, that the Messiah should be what is here described, and being such, should exercise all the prerogatives of the Godhead.

Any one, therefore, who bears in mind how frequently names derived from one nature of Christ, or from his office, are applied to him as one individual person, will find no difficulty in explaining those passages in which the name, Son of God, is used for the Messiah, who, as such, is inferior to the Father and dependent upon him. Whenever, therefore, the Father is said to give life, authority, or power to the Son, it is to this mysteriously constituted person; not to his divine nature as such. When the Son of man is said to be in heaven, the divine person, who is called the Son of man, is declared to be omnipresent, not the human nature of the Saviour, in itself considered. When Christ is said to be God over all, it is asserted that the person who has assumed the office of the Messiah, is truly divine. Passages, therefore, in which the Son is said to be inferior to the Father, to be delivered unto death, &c., afford no objection to the opinion that the name is given in virtue of the eternal relation which he sustains to the first Person in the Trinity. This obvious remark is made in this connection, in order that it may be present to our readers' minds, when they turn to the passage under consideration (John v. 17, et seq.), as it is obvious, that in many parts of this chapter the word Son is used for the whole person of the Redeemer.

A passage very similar to the one just considered, occurs in John x. 30—39. In verse 30, Jesus had said, "I and the Father are one." The Jews understood this as a declaration that he was God, and accordingly again took up stones to stone him, as they had done before, c. viii. 59. Christ demanded why they did this. He had performed many of the works of his Father,\* for which of these did they stone him? The Jews reply, for no good work, but for his making himself God. How had he done this? Why, by saying ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἓν ἐσμεν v. 30. According to the interpretation given to these words by many commentators, Trinitarians as well as others, they contain no claim to equality with the Father. Erasmus, Calvin, Melancthon, and many others say, that they express nothing more than unity of purpose and counsel or will. It may be admitted that the phrase ἐν εἶναι expresses any kind of union of purpose, affection, spirit, or nature. It depends entirely upon

\* ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μου, where ἐκ is probably a mere sign of the Gen., see v. 37, where ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς μου stands in the same sense. See for similar examples xviii. 3, Rev. ii. 9, Luke ii. 35, Acts xix. 34, John iii. 25, and perhaps Rom. xi. 26, ἐκ Σιὼν ὁ βρῦμένος deliverer of Zion. Or if ἐκ expresses the efficient cause, "works which I do through the Father," then is this passage to be explained by a reference to cap. v. 17, 19, and to John xiv. 10, where Christ says of the Father, he doeth the works.

the connection in what sense it is to be taken in any particular passage. It is surely a presumption in favour of an unity of power and divinity being here intended, that the persons to whom these words were addressed so understood them. The whole drift of our Saviour's discourse impressed them with the idea that he meant to make himself God (*ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν*), an exposition which our Saviour does not refute but confirms. That the Jews understood him correctly, will appear from a view of the context. Jesus was walking in the porch of the Temple, when the Jews came and demanded that he should tell them plainly whether he were the Christ or not. This he would not do; but referred them to his previous declarations and to his miracles. They neither believed the one nor the other, because they were not of his sheep: his sheep did hear his voice, and he gave to them eternal life (is not this claiming to be God?) and they shall never perish. Why? because "none can pluck them out of my hand." But how is it that Christ can say of himself, that he gives eternal life and can protect his sheep against all their enemies? Because he and the Father are one, and he can do all that the Father does, his Father is greater than all. There is surely something more than unity of will or purpose here intended, it is unity of power; and if he and the Father are one in power, the Jews were certainly right in concluding that they must be one in nature. *Εἰ δὲ ἔν κατὰ δύναμιν*, says the Greek commentator Euthymius, *ἐν ἅρα καὶ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα καὶ οὐσίαν καὶ φύσιν*. Now what reply does our Master make to this accusation of the Jews, that he "made himself God?" He in the first instance makes no direct reply at all. He neither says that he was or was not God, but does what was his frequent custom when questions were proposed to him, or objections started, and that is, turns the attention of his hearers to themselves, that they may notice the disposition whence their questions or objections arose, and then so turns his discourse, that all who had ears to hear, should find in what he said an answer to the question or solution of the difficulty proposed. Christ will convince the Jews of their stubborn unbelief, and perverse opposition to everything he said. They objected to the fact, that he had called himself God. Jesus does not explain in what sense he had done so, but says, in effect, you would not be so ready to accuse me of blasphemy for this, if you were not bent on opposition to me and my cause; for your own scriptures call kings and magistrates gods, and if the title can be given with propriety to divinely commissioned men (*πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐγένετο* either to those who received commands of God and acted in his stead; or *πρὸς οὓς* Mark xii. 12, Luke xii. 41, for *περὶ ὧν* concerning whom this declaration of God is made), surely it may be given in the same, if in no other sense, to the great personage whom God has selected, and set apart (sanctified), and sent into the world. But that I am the Son of God in a far higher sense, a sense which authorizes me to say "that I and the Father are one," v. 30, is plain, from the fact that I do the works of my Father (the

same divine and almighty works, raise the dead, heal the sick, execute judgment, see v. 32, and 37, c. xiv. 10), if you will not believe me, believe these works and know that "I am in the Father and the Father in me." Were the Jews satisfied with this explanation? Did they imagine that he assumed the name Son of God as an official title, and that he meant no more by it than when applied to kings and magistrates? By no means; they saw that he used it in a sense, which involved equality with God, and they accordingly immediately endeavoured to seize him, but he escaped out of their hands.

There is another remark to be made on this passage, and that is, it is perfectly clear that Christ uses the terms God and Son of God, *θεός*, and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*, in exactly the same sense. The Jews said *ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν Θεόν*, thou makest thyself God; Christ replies, is it blasphemy to make myself the Son of God? Where it is evident, that making himself God and making himself the Son of God, are considered as precisely the same. The remark of Storr, therefore, on this passage is well founded, that God and Son of God are, as to Christ's meaning here, synonymous.\*

There are several other passages which might be adduced in support of the opinion which we are advocating, as Matt. ii. 27, and Heb. 1; but this our object does not demand, and our limits will not permit. We have already stated, that we purposed only to endeavour to show, that Christ is called Son of God, in reference to his divine nature, or in virtue of the eternal relation between himself and Father. If any one can prove that there are other reasons for his being so called, it militates nothing against the position which we have assumed. As the term, Son, is used in Scripture to express such a variety of relations, as dependence, derivation, similarity, community of nature, &c., there is no antecedent improbability in Christ's being called Son of God, not only because he is of the same nature with the Father, but also because he is the object of his peculiar love; because, as man, he is derived from him and dependent on him. And if kings are called sons of God in the Old Testament, as the representatives of God, why then Christ, as the great Mediatorial King, may pre-eminently be called the Son of God. We say there is no antecedent improbability that this is the case; and if any one is satisfied that such is actually the fact, we should not be disposed to dispute the point. Still we confess ourselves unable to see the conclusiveness of the argument to prove, that the Redeemer is called the Son of God, in virtue of his exaltation to the Mediatorial throne. This opinion, however, is a very general one, and is adopted by many who still believe in his being the Son of God in a far higher sense. For ourselves, however, seeing that this name is peculiar, in the New Testament

\* Dass er der Sohn Gottes, oder Gott sey—denn beides lief nach dem, von den Juden wohl gefassten Sinn Jesu auf Eines hinaus. See Zweck der evang. Geschichte, p. 467.



at least, to Christ (with the exception of Luke iii. 36, where the reason of its being applied to Adam is perfectly obvious), and that it is used by Christ and his apostles in many instances, in direct reference to his relation as God, to the Father, we prefer considering this relation as the primary and most important, if not the sole ground of its application to him by inspired men, whenever they intend using it in any other than a mere historical manner. Luke i. 35, may be an exception to this remark. In the great majority of instances, the phrase occurs merely as a designation of the Messiah. In the Old Testament, it was predicted that the Messiah was to be the Son of God. It was very natural, therefore, that this name or title should be very common among those who were waiting for his appearance. Hence, when Nathaniel exclaimed, "Thou art the Son of God," he doubtless intended to say, Thou art the Messiah, and so in a multitude of cases. These passages, however, only prove that the Messiah was called the Son of God; not why he was so called. Our Saviour styling himself so frequently the Son of man, informs us that this was a proper appellation for the great Deliverer, but gives us no information of the grounds of its application. This is a very distinct question.

The arguments which are commonly adduced to show that Son of God, as applied to Christ, is a title of office, and equivalent with Messiah, are principally the following. It is said, that in the Old Testament, kings and magistrates are called Sons of God. This is exceedingly rare. The passage in Ps. lxxxii. 6, is peculiar; Princes are here called אֱלֹהִים as being objects of reverence, and בְּרֵי עֶלְיוֹן *Sons of the Highest*, in the corresponding clause, may, in this instance, receive the same meaning. But it is very far from being the common usage of the scriptures, to call kings the Sons of God. And even if it were, this would prove very little as to the proper meaning of the phrase, Son of God, in the singular: as there is such a marked difference in the use of these expressions, throughout the word of God. We are not prepared to say, that the term Son of God is never applied in the Old Testament, to any royal personage. But in the cases in which it is so applied, it does not express their royal dignity, but merely their being the objects of God's peculiar care and love. Thus, if 2 Sam. vii. 14, be referred to Solomon (in any sense), "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son," the meaning obviously is, I will regard and treat him with peculiar favour. He shall be my child, and I will treat him accordingly. We should be at a loss to fix on any one instance, in which this phrase is expressive of the kingly office. Ps. lxxxix. 27, "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth," can hardly be considered as a case in point. For the expression, "I will make him my first-born," means nothing more, than that I will treat him as "my first-born," that is, with peculiar favour. We think, therefore, that the argument from the Old Testament is very far from being conclusive on this point. It seems

hardly to afford a presumption in favour of the opinion, that Christ is called Son of God, on account of his dignity as Messiah.

Another argument is derived from the second Psalm, v. 7, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." The first remark which we should make on this passage, is, that the second clause probably expresses no more than the first. Thou art my Son, this day, now, art thou my Son; now more clearly than ever. This is agreeable to a common characteristic of the Hebrew. So in Jeremiah ii. 27, "Saying to a stock, thou art my father, and to a stone, thou hast begotten me."—And 2 Sam. vii. 14, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." See also Deut. xxxii. 6. In all these passages, the second clause is synonymous with the first. Secondly, we would admit, that the word *הַיּוֹם* *this day*, refers to the time contemplated in the preceding verse; i. e., the time in which Christ, the subject of the Psalm, was anointed, or inaugurated as king, on the holy hill of Zion; that is, to the time in which he was clearly set forth as King of Israel. The whole question is, does the passage declare that he was then constituted the Son of God, or was then clearly proved to be such? We prefer the latter mode of interpretation. First, because from the connection, these words do not appear to contain the inaugurating formula, so to speak, addressed to Christ; but rather, the ground of the universal dominion which is committed to him. They form no part of the decree giving him universal dominion; they are merely the solemn introductory address. The sense is, Thou art my Son; therefore, ask of me and I will give thee universal dominion, &c. That is, these introductory words of the address express the dignity of Christ's person, and assign the reason, why he has the right and power to rule over all nations, and why all people should put their trust in him. In solemn discourse, such introductions are very frequent; and they often contain the reason or ground of what follows: as, "I am the Lord, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt; thou shalt have no other gods before me;" that is, because I am the Lord, &c. So here, because thou art my Son. This is agreeable also to the constant manner of the sacred writers, presenting the personal dignity of Christ as the ground of his universal power and authority. Since he is possessed of divine perfections, is the Son of God, of the same nature, therefore he is made universal King.

But again, if peculiar stress be laid upon the second clause, "I have begotten thee," it must be admitted, that it can with equal propriety be rendered, I have made thee my Son, or I have declared thee to be such. In other words, *הַיּוֹם* may here be taken declaratively, according to the canon so fully illustrated by Glasius, Phil. Sacra, lib. iii., tr. iii., can 15, and which is of such frequent application in Hebrew. The meaning then would be, Thou art my Son, this day have I declared, or exhibited thee, as such. This view of the passage is given by Venema, by Morus in

his Com. Exegeticus, p. 260, by Anton as quoted by Rosenmüller, p. 30 of vol. i., Part iii., of his Scholia, by Kuinoel on Acts xiii. 32, and many others. We think the proper method of deciding which view of the passage is most correct, is to inquire which is favoured by the analogy of scripture. Is Christ said to be constituted the Son of God, by his exaltation or resurrection ; or, is his resurrection and exaltation given as evidence that he is the Son of God ? Agreeably to the remark made in our last Number, the resurrection of Christ is almost uniformly presented as the great decisive evidence of his Sonship, as well as of his Messiahship. See Rom. i. 3, 4, Acts xiii., &c. He was neither made Son nor Messiah by his resurrection, but was thereby proved to be both the one and the other.

We think it clear, therefore, that no argument can be derived from this passage to show why Christ is called Son. It simply declares, that he is the Son of God ; but what this imports, must we learn from other passages.

The words in 2 Sam. vii. 14, "I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son," are adduced as an argument on this subject. It is said, that it is not easy to conceive how a thing can be predicted as future, which has existed from all eternity. This is very true. But the point of the prediction is simply this ; the king that shall arise, shall be my Son. So it is predicted that the Messiah should be the "Mighty God ;" not that he was to become such, but was to be such. Whether 2 Sam. vii. 14, be referred to Christ, or Solomon, it is of no weight in this discussion. It simply declares, that the king that was to arise, should stand in a very near and tender relation to God. What that relation is, must be learned elsewhere.

Acts xiii. 32, 33, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus *again* ;" as it is written in the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," is considered as proving that Christ is called Son of God, in virtue of his resurrection, as the commencement of his elevation to supreme dignity. We question very much, even adopting the common translation of this passage, whether this be its proper meaning. According to our version, the point to be proved by the passage from the second Psalm, is indeed, that Christ has been raised from the dead. But this point is fully proved by this Psalm, according to our interpretation of it. It contains a prediction that God would clearly set forth the Messiah, as his Son. How was this done ? In various ways, and among others with peculiar clearness, by his resurrection ; as Paul elsewhere says, Rom. i. 3, 4. This passage, therefore, according to our view of it, is as applicable to the apostle's purpose, as on the opposite one. But it is far from being certain that there is any reference in this passage (Acts xiii. 32, 33), to the resurrection at all. The words ἀναστήσας Ἰησοῦν, rendered, "having raised up Jesus



*again*," properly mean, "having raised up Jesus," which may express his being called into existence, or sent forth as the Messiah. The grounds for preferring this view of the passage are strong, if not conclusive. In the first place, the verb ἀνίστημί, when it refers to the resurrection, has commonly ἐκ νεκρῶν, or some equivalent expression after it. 2. It is often used to express the idea of calling into existence: as Matt. xxii. 24, "raise up seed." Acts iii. 22, "A prophet like unto me will God raise up." See also, Acts vii. 27. The verb ἐγείρω is used in the same sense, see Acts xiii. 22 (and according to the common text). 3. The context favours this interpretation. Paul is here endeavouring to prove that Jesus is the Christ. In verse 23, he asserts that of the seed of David, God, according to his promise, hath raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. That Jesus is the Saviour, he proves first by the testimony of John the Baptist, and secondly by the resurrection of Christ. The fact of his resurrection, he says, 31st verse, may be proved by those who saw him many days. Having thus established the point that Jesus is the Christ, he says, "we declare unto you glad tidings, how the promise made unto the fathers (what promise? why, the promise referred to in the 23d v. that God would raise up a Saviour), God hath fulfilled unto us, in that he hath raised up Jesus." There is no allusion here to the resurrection, for the promise to which the apostle had reference, was not that Christ should rise from the dead, but that a Saviour should appear; and of this the second Psalm is a clear prediction. The 34th verse makes this still plainer; for Paul, having announced to the Jews the glad tidings that the Saviour had come, turns to another subject, and says, "But that he raised him from the dead (as he had asserted, v. 30),—he said on this wise," &c.; and then goes on to prove that his resurrection was predicted in Ps. xvi. It seems clear, therefore, that verse 33 has no reference to Christ's rising from the dead, and consequently that Ps. ii. 7, is not quoted to prove that point. If this be the correct interpretation of this passage, it of course affords no argument in favour of the opinion that Christ is called the Son of God, on account of his being raised from the dead, and exalted as Messiah.

Such passages as Matt. xvi. 15, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," John i. 49, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel," do not prove that Son of God and Christ are synonymous, any more than the expression "Christ, the Saviour of the world," proves that the word Christ means Saviour. They prove simply, what no one denies, that Son of God was a very common appellation for the Messiah among the Jews; but they throw no light on its import or the ground of its application. In the great majority of cases, it is used very much as a proper name, and therefore, such cases prove nothing, one way or the other, as to its meaning.

### ESSAY III.

## THE DECREES OF GOD.\*

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WE are so much accustomed to receive our literature from Great Britain, that we are prone to overlook valuable compositions produced in our own country; especially, if they proceed from a section of the United States not famous for book making; or from the pen of an author but little known. Notwithstanding the national pride, in relation to American literature, so disgustingly displayed in some of our popular journals, it is a fact, that our booksellers are in the habit of reprinting British works on particular subjects, much inferior to writings of home-production which lie in utter neglect. Perhaps the eastern States ought to be considered as an exception from this remark; where, from the first settlement of the country, authorship has not been uncommon; and where almost every preacher, at some time in his life, has the pleasure of seeing something of his own composition, in print. Still it may be observed, that the literature of New England circulates freely only within her own limits. Of the thousands of printed sermons which run the round through her homogeneous population, very few copies find their way into the other States, except where her sons form the mass of the population. This restriction, however, is becoming less and less every year; and as the population of other parts of the country acquire a taste for reading, the literary wares of our eastern brethren get into wider circulation, and find a readier sale. But leaving out of the account large towns and cities, there is but a small share of literature in the greater part of our country. There are scattered everywhere through the land well informed and well educated men; but very few of them ever think of writing anything more than a paragraph for the newspapers; or, at most, a Fourth of July speech. Even in the oldest of the United States, celebrated for men of talents and extraordinary political and legal attainments, all the writings of a theological kind which have ever issued from the press, might, I presume, be easily compressed within the narrow limits of a common portmanteau. When, therefore, anything in the shape of a religious book proceeds from that quarter, it should receive particular attention. It has on this account, as well as on

\* Originally published in 1831, in review of the following work:  
*The Divine Purpose displayed in the works of Providence and Grace.* By Rev.  
John Matthews, D.D., (late of) Shepherdstown, Virginia.

others, seemed to us proper to bring more conspicuously before the public the little volume, the title of which stands at the head of this article. These Letters, we have understood, were originally published in the Evangelical and Literary Magazine of Virginia. They were afterwards collected and published in a small volume at the Franklin press, Richmond; and in the following year, were reprinted at Lexington, Kentucky, with the author's name, which did not appear in the Richmond edition. This then may be reckoned the third edition of these Letters; but still they are almost entirely unknown to the reading population of the middle and northern States. Since this work was published, the worthy author has been appointed Professor of Theology in a seminary in Indiana, and has entered on the duties of his office.

The object of the writer seems to have been, to exhibit, in a clear and familiar way, some of the strongest arguments for the scriptural doctrine of the universality and particularity of the divine decrees; and to remove the prejudices, and answer the objections of many serious well-meaning people, who are shocked at the mere mention of this subject, even if it be couched in the very language of inspiration. There are persons of some mental cultivation, and of a serious and devout character, who cannot bear to read, or hear read, the eighth and ninth chapters of the Epistle to the Romans; or the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

The real opinions of serious people cannot, with any certainty, be judged of by the doctrinal standards of the denominations to which they have attached themselves. This is especially the case in the south and the west, where many people have been brought up without religious education of any kind whatever. Now, where such persons become serious inquirers, or hopeful converts, they join any religious society among whom they happen to have received their serious impressions: or, if there be different denominations mingled together, they commonly attach themselves to one or the other, not from any distinct knowledge of the system of doctrines which they hold, but from a preference to their order of worship and mode of preaching; or, from an opinion, that the members of one society are more intelligent, consistent, or pious than those of another. Persons thus introduced into a particular church, are often much perplexed and offended at some of the doctrines which they sometimes hear preached, and which they find in the creed of the society to which they have attached themselves: particularly, they are apt to stumble at the doctrine of *predestination* and *election*, as held by Calvinists. It is not uncommon to find serious people, whose feelings are so affected with the mere contemplation of these doctrines, that they are thrown into deep distress, and even agony, whenever they occur to their minds; and while they dare not totally reject them, as many do, they are altogether reluctant to receive them, and are afraid of the light by which they are shown to be a part of divine revelation. We have known many estimable persons to continue in this state of conflict,



between their judgment and their feelings, many years; who could never, with the least composure or patience, hear anything said on these points. Not that they were convinced that these doctrines are not revealed in the word of God, but because, through some prejudice or unhappy association, they always excited in them feelings of horror and distress. To meet cases of this sort, the Letters under review, seem to have been written: and, in our opinion, they are the production of no ordinary mind. In the discussion, not only is all harsh and all technical language avoided, but there is a sparing use even of scriptural phrases, until the author has proceeded to some extent, in developing the true nature of the doctrine.

The plan adopted is, first, to deprecate "*the pernicious effects of party spirit in the church*"—next, to show "*the importance of truth*"—then "*the influence of prejudice*"—*the true doctrine of divine decrees, and of divine providence—the doctrine of a particular providence, extending to all events—that free agency is not suspended, or violated by the divine purpose—proof of the extent of the divine plan from the promises and prophecies—the purposes of God and moral agency consistent, but incomprehensible—the nature of moral government—salvation by grace—all favours bestowed according to God's purpose, good pleasure or fore-ordination. Therefore, it depends on the will of God, who shall be saved.—The means of salvation suited to each individual, included in the divine purpose—providence subservient to the purposes of grace—great events and small cannot be separated, in the plan of the Almighty—the former are made up of the latter.—Man, as far as he has foresight and means, is a predestinarian in all his own important schemes—the architect, the farmer, &c., determine on ends, and elect means to accomplish them.*

The eighteenth and nineteenth letters are on the subject of "*the final perseverance of Christians*;" and in the last, the author undertakes to show, *that these views are adapted to excite devotion; and, consequently, cannot be unfriendly to piety and morality.*

It will be seen by the above syllabus, that in this little volume, very interesting and important subjects are brought into discussion: and it is one recommendation of this work, that a doctrine, most commonly handled in a forbidding and polemical style, is here treated with great calmness, and brought down to common apprehension, by means of familiar and appropriate illustrations. There is not a harsh or censorious word in the whole book. It may, therefore, be recommended as a specimen of mildness in the discussion of a subject, which commonly produces warmth and hard speeches. It would afford us real pleasure, to see a treatise on the other side, equally characterized by the spirit of candour and kindness: and whatever cause may be promoted by fierce controversy and denunciatory declamation, we are sure that the cause of truth gains nothing by such weapons. The pool must be calm in order to be transparent; and truth is rendered invisible, or undistinguishable, in the perturbed waters of wrathful contro-

versy. The Christian warrior should ever remember, that the weapons of his warfare, though "mighty to the pulling down of strong holds," are not *carnal* but *spiritual*. Though he must *contend* for the faith, he may not *strive*. All "vain janglings" and "logomachies" are strictly forbidden; and all discussions that tend rather "to engender strifes, than godly edifying." We should, therefore, be desirous of giving currency to this unpretending book, on account of the Christian spirit which pervades it throughout. No one, however he may differ from the author, need be afraid of having his feelings wounded by the perusal of these pages. But this is not the only recommendation of this little volume. It contains much sound, and we may say, *profound* reasoning: or, to express ourselves more correctly, the result of profound reasoning; for there is no long and elaborate chain of ratiocination—here everything is simple, and remarkably adapted to the capacity of common readers; but no man could render such a subject familiar, and easily intelligible, who had not deeply and maturely pondered it, and viewed it in all its important aspects, and especially, in its practical bearings.

The fact cannot be denied, that the doctrine of absolute decrees: or the divine purposes; or predestination; or election; or by whatever terms it may be expressed, is viewed by most men—and not the unlearned only—as an absurd and unreasonable doctrine. From the days of Lucian, it has been set up to ridicule, and scurrilous abuse; and they who hold it, are considered and represented, by men of the highest order of intellect and greatest learning, as denying human accountableness; or as grossly inconsistent, in holding that all things are decreed in the eternal purpose, and yet that men are free in their actions. Seldom, however, are we favoured with any calm, impartial reasoning on this subject. It is treated, as if the doctrine was self-evidently false and absurd; and as if there was no need of argument; since every man's reason must teach him, that he cannot be justly accountable for actions, which by no possibility he could avoid, as they were from all eternity, absolutely decreed.

This strong prejudice against the doctrine of predestination, is not confined to the men of the world; it has entered the church; and by a large majority of those who have assumed the office of interpreters of the mind of God, it is rejected with abhorrence; and by many of them scouted as not only absurd, but subversive of all morality. And, which is somewhat surprising, ministers of churches, which formerly held this doctrine firmly, and expressed it strongly in their formulas of faith, do strenuously oppose it; and contrary to all common usage of words, and correct rules of interpretation, pretend, that it is not contained in their articles of religion. If a thousand impartial, intelligent men could be brought to peruse the seventeenth Article of the Church of England, and of the American Episcopal Church, whatever might be their own belief, they would, as we suppose, unanimously declare, that the doctrine

of predestination, as held by Calvinists, is clearly and strongly expressed in that Article : and the whole history of the reformation in the Church of England goes to prove, that this interpretation is correct ; for in the early days of that reformed church, all her distinguished ministers were predestinarians ; just as much as were the ministers of Geneva. No stronger evidence of this is needed, than the fact, that the institutes of John Calvin—so grossly calumniated by many leading men of that church now—was the text book, enjoined by authority in both the universities. But our object in the remarks which we are about to make, is, to inquire, whether there is any foundation, in truth and reason, for the general aversion to this doctrine.

It cannot be doubted that the language of scripture, in many places, is favourable to the doctrine. All things seem to be there ascribed to the counsel and will of God ; and the minutest events, as well as the greatest, to be under the government of his providence. Things, to our apprehension, most casual and most trivial, are specified, as under the direction of God : for what is more casual than the drawing of a lot, but the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord ; and what seems more trivial than the falling of the hairs of your head, and yet this event, apparently unimportant as it is, never takes place, without our Heavenly Father.

But while the Bible, throughout, ascribes the occurrence of all events, of every kind, to the will of God ; yet, it as uniformly represents man as a free, accountable agent ; yea, it represents him as acting most wickedly, in those very transactions which are most expressly declared to be determined by the counsel of God. It would seem from this, that the inspired writers perceived no inconsistency between a purpose of God, that a certain event should occur, and that it should be brought about by the free and accountable agency of man. And it is believed, also, that men of sound minds, who have never heard of any objections to this doctrine, are not apt to be perplexed with any apparent inconsistency between these two things. And, we are persuaded, that were it not for the ambiguity of certain words, and the artful sophistry with which truth and error are confounded by those who oppose the doctrine, very few persons would experience any difficulty on this subject. If a man of plain sense should be informed by prophecy, that he would certainly kill a fellow creature the next day or year, and that in perpetrating this act he would be actuated by malice, it would never be likely to enter his mind, that he should not be guilty of any crime, because the action was certain before it was committed. But if you change the terms, and say, that he would be under a *necessity* to perform this act ; that it being absolutely certain, he could not possibly avoid it ; immediately the subject becomes perplexed, and involved in difficulty ; for every man of common sense feels that he cannot justly be accountable for what he could not possibly avoid ; and that for what he does from absolute necessity he cannot, in the nature of things,



be culpable. Here, the whole difficulty is produced by the use of ambiguous and improper terms. While nothing was presented to the mind, but the certainty of the event, coupled with voluntary action, no relief from responsibility was felt: but the moment we speak of the act as produced by necessity, and as being unavoidable, the judgment respecting its nature is changed. These terms include the idea of a compulsory power acting upon us, not only without, but in opposition to our own will. A necessary event is one which cannot be voluntary or free; for if it were spontaneous, it could not be necessary; these two things being diametrically opposite. So, an unavoidable action is one which takes place against our wishes and will. But a voluntary action may be as certain as any other; and by one who knows futurity, may be as certainly predicted. Even a man may often be certain beforehand, how a voluntary agent will act in given circumstances, provided he knows the moral character of the agent. As if a being actuated by no other feeling towards another but malice, should be placed in such circumstances, that he has the choice of performing a benevolent action towards that individual or omitting it, he will most certainly neglect to do it, or, if he may with impunity injure such an one, or do him good, he will most certainly choose the former; yet is such a malignant agent perfectly free, and perfectly accountable. These things are agreeable to the common feelings of all men, and depend on no metaphysical niceties. And there can be no doubt, but that a large share of the difficulty which perplexes honest minds, in the contemplation of the divine purpose, which fixes the certainty of events, arises from the confounding of things totally distinct, by the use of ambiguous terms.

But still it may be thought by some, that as to the point of man's responsibility, there is no difference between certainty and necessity; that if it be certainly fixed, that a man shall act in a particular way, it is impossible that he should do otherwise, and therefore he cannot be free. To which we would reply, that the whole difficulty supposed to exist, arises, as before, from confounding ideas which should be kept distinct. There is no manner of inconsistency between the certainty of a future action and liberty in the performance of that action. A voluntary action may be as certainly future as any other; and spontaneity is the only liberty which can be predicated of the will itself. If an action is voluntary, it is free: and the idea of a necessary volition is absurd and contradictory. When, however, we speak in accordance with common sense and experience, of liberty, as being essential to moral agency, we always mean liberty of *action*; that is, the liberty of doing *what we will*. Now, if certainty were inconsistent with freedom, it would seem that uncertainty was that which constituted the liberty of an action; but it is evident that an action produced by compulsion may be as uncertain as a voluntary act; and, as was before stated, an action may be perfectly voluntary and free, and yet certain. If we know what we will do the next hour, surely

this knowledge of the certainty of our own act does not alter the nature. If, when considered as uncertain and unknown, it is free and voluntary, if the same action and produced by the same cause is viewed as certain or as known, it cannot affect the nature of the action, as to its moral quality. And if it were the fact, that the certainty of the existence of a future act destroyed its freedom, then the probability of its occurrence would have the same effect, so far as the event was probable. And according to this doctrine, every human act, or nearly every one, would be affected as to its liberty; for what action ever occurs, of the existence of which beforehand, there may not be a probability in the view of some one? But why should uncertainty render an action free and moral, which would not otherwise be so? Surely this is no self-evident truth. So far from it, that in thinking of the morality of an act, or responsibility of an agent, we never take this circumstance into view, whether before it happened it was certain or uncertain. And if certainty affected the character of an act before it occurred, why should not absolute certainty after the event, have the same effect? When an act is performed, its certainty is so great, that no power can render it uncertain; and no good reason can be assigned, why this should not destroy its freedom, as much as previous certainty. But the truth is, that the moral character of an action is not in the least affected by its previous certainty or uncertainty, but is determined by its own nature;—its conformity or nonconformity, to a moral rule.

Let us now return to the consideration of the decrees of God, or the Divine purpose. And the whole subject may be reduced to these two points. First, did God, when about to give existence to the universe, comprehend in his infinite mind a perfect plan of his own work? And secondly, is the existing state of things accordant with the original plan? If both these questions are answered in the affirmative, then the dispute about the decrees of God is ended; for by his decrees nothing else is intended, than that perfect plan which originally existed in the mind of the Great Architect: and if creation and providence answer to this plan, then is it true, that God has “fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.” If any objection is felt to the word “decrees,” it may be changed for another less exceptionable; especially as it is not the term usually employed in the scriptures to express this idea; and also, because it is in relation to this subject, used in a sense considerably different from its common acceptation. The phrase, “Divine purpose,” employed by an author, is both scriptural and appropriate, and liable to no objection which occurs to us. It is a principle with us, not to contend about words, where there is an agreement in ideas. Let us then see what exception can be taken to the first position laid down above, viz., that God, when about to produce the universe of creatures, had in his mind a perfect plan of the whole work. This, of course, would include every creature and every action and event, with the nature which should be possessed by each, and the

causes and qualities of every action. If the Supreme Creator formed any plan of operation, this plan would certainly include everything which should ever come to pass, unless there are some things which are of such a nature, that they could not be embraced in any pre-conceived plan. This brings us up to the very gist of the objection. It is alleged, that the free actions of moral agents could not possibly form any part of such a plan, because, if fixed by a purpose or plan, they could not come to pass as free actions, "and depending for their existence on the free will" of voluntary agents, could not, in the nature of things, be fore-known. This is the foundation of two distinct theories; both of which must be fairly brought into view, and subjected to the examination of reason. And we begin with that one which is most remote from what we believe to be the true theory. According to this, God neither proposed anything respecting the free actions of moral agents, nor was it possible for him to know what they would be. As this theory has, at first view, the appearance of denying the omniscience of God, its advocates have taken great pains to obviate this objection. They allege, that as it is no disparagement of God's omnipotence to say, that there are impossible things which his power cannot accomplish; so in regard to omniscience, there may be things which cannot be known, not from any imperfection in this attribute, but because, from their uncertain nature, they are not capable of being known. There is the appearance of plausibility in this representation, but it is only an appearance, for in regard to the performance of impossibilities, the thing is absurd and inconceivable, as for example, to cause a thing to be and not be at the same time. There is here really no object on which power can be exerted. But the case is far different in regard to the knowledge of future contingencies. The defect of a knowledge of these argues a real imperfection in this attribute. We cannot conceive of a being possessing an increase of perfection by a power to do that which is impossible; for, as was said before, the thing is wholly inconceivable. But we can conceive of knowledge which extends to free actions of moral agents. Man himself possesses some degree of this knowledge; and we cannot attribute omniscience to the Deity without including in our idea, the perfection of this knowledge. To say that there are things which from their nature cannot be known, is only to say, in other words, that there is no omniscient being in the universe; for if there were, there would be nothing unknown to him. Moreover, it should be well considered before this theory is adopted, that this ignorance must relate to all actions of this class; for if one can be certainly known as future, without destroying its freedom, so may all. And it matters not by what means the knowledge of future contingencies may be acquired, it must equally, in all cases, affect the freedom and morality of the actions known. So that, if the governor of the universe, from observing the conduct of creatures in time past, should be able with certainty to foreknow what they will do in future, such knowledge would be incompatible with the freedom of actions thus known.



And, as we observed in another part of this review, if certain knowledge is thus inconsistent with moral agency, no reason can be assigned, why probable knowledge, in proportion to its approximation to certainty, should not have the same effect.

But what idea does it afford of the government of the universe to suppose, that the Supreme Ruler is totally ignorant of all the future volitions of his creatures, and of all the consequences of these volitions? Dark, indeed, are the prospects of the wise Director of all things, on this theory; and miserable must be the suspense and anxiety of him who sits at the helm, if every future voluntary act, of so many millions of free agents, is utterly unknown to him. No provision can be made beforehand to meet any emergency. The universe must be governed by sudden shifts and expedients, adopted as the exigence may demand. And on this principle, general laws, for the government of the world, would be altogether unwise, because they could not be so arranged as to meet the cases which might, in the course of events, occur; these being entirely unknown. Such a theory, if pursued, must lead inevitably to atheism. Nothing more is necessary to prove the falsity of this theory, than to trace it to consequences so absurd and dreadful.

The theory which takes from the Deity all certain knowledge of future free actions of moral agents, is not only repugnant to right reason, but contrary to the whole tenor of scripture. According to it, the fall of our first parents was an event unknown to God before it actually took place; and no provision, therefore, could have been made to meet the exigency. No plan of recovery could have been devised. All which is expressly contradictory to numerous plain declarations of the Bible. That evidence, however, which demonstrably proves the falsity of this theory, is, the long chain of prophecy, which foretells innumerable events which are dependent on the free will of man. Many of these predictions have been exactly fulfilled, by men who knew not God; and generally, by agents who had no idea that they were executing any divine purpose, or accomplishing any divine prediction: and the responsibility of these agents, and the morality of their actions, were not in the least affected by the circumstance that they were fore-ordained, and foretold by the prophets. The illustration of this position from the scriptures, is full, and could easily be adduced; but this has often been done by others, and is inconsistent with the narrow limits allotted to this review. We would simply refer the reader to the history of Adam, of Pharaoh, of Joseph, of Saul, of Nebuchadnezzar, of Cyrus, of Judas who betrayed Christ, and of the Jews who crucified him. If the scriptures contain one word of truth, it is most certain that the free actions of moral agents are fore-known.

To evade the horrible consequences of denying foreknowledge to the Deity, as being subversive of his absolute and infinite perfection, some speculative men have invented a theory, if possible, more absurd; and that is, that God has the perfection of omniscience,

but it is not necessary that he should exercise it, in regard to all events. They suppose, that he could know all the volitions of free agents which ever will exist, but that he does not choose to know them, before they come to pass, lest he should infringe the liberty of the creature. The former theory attributed the ignorance of the Deity of future contingencies to the necessity of nature ; this ascribes it to his will. But according to both, actual knowledge of such events is not possessed ; and the only difference in regard to the divine attributes which exists between them, is, that according to the first, God is supposed to be necessarily imperfect, while by the second, he is voluntarily imperfect. But as it relates to the difficulty, or rather impossibility, of governing the world with wisdom, they are precisely the same. God remains ignorant of every free action, of every moral agent, until it actually takes place. To whom the world is indebted for this extraordinary hypothesis, we cannot tell, but the Chevalier Ramsay was the first writer, known to us, who published it. And it ought to have died with him ; but to the grief of many of his brethren, and the surprise of all reflecting theologians, it has found an advocate in the learned Dr. Adam Clarke. But there is so little danger of its being adopted by any considerate, sensible man, that we may safely leave it to sink by its own absurdity. We are not a little astonished to find such a man as Dr. Beattie, in his *Elements of Moral Science*, seriously proposing the first mentioned theory, as a relief from the inevitable consequences of the doctrine of certain foreknowledge. It seems, however, to show how heavily these consequences press upon the Arminian scheme.

We now come to the consideration of the second general theory, mentioned above. According to this, God, it is admitted, does certainly and perfectly foreknow whatever shall come to pass, without any exceptions ; but in regard to the free actions of moral agents, he has formed no purpose, nor made any decree, but leaves them fully to the freedom of their own will. And to support this theory, much pains is taken to prove that mere knowledge cannot affect the freedom or morality of the actions which are its objects ; and it is, moreover, attempted to be shown, that a purpose, that an action shall exist, in future, must render it necessary. Now, in regard to the first position, we not only admit, but strongly maintain, that the foreknowledge of the certain existence of an action does not render it a necessary action ; if the agent be free, the action is free, whether we suppose it to be foreknown or not. And we agree also, that it is not the knowledge of a future action which renders it certain : it must, in the order of things, be certain before it can be foreknown. But if an event be certainly foreknown, it must have a certain future existence, and for that certain future existence, there must be some reason or cause. Now that cause is either the purpose of God that it should be so, or it is something else. If the former, then it is decreed ; but if it be some other cause, whatever that may be, as it fixes the certainty of the event,

it must be as inconsistent with freedom, as if the same effect was produced by the divine purpose. If another cause may render an event so certain that it may be infallibly foreknown, without any interference with moral agency, then the purpose of God may render an event certain, without any violation of the freedom of the creature. But if it be alleged, that there is no other cause of the event necessary to be supposed, than the free agency of the creature; we reply that, in one sense, this is true. It is true, as it relates to the proximate efficient cause. But, if God knows how such a creature will act, there must be some foundation on which this knowledge rests; that is, there must be some reason why the free creature should act as it is foreseen that he will act. For, as every free agent has the liberty of acting, or not; or of performing a different action from the one which he eventually performs; if there existed no reason why the one took place and not the other, all knowledge of the action before it occurs is necessarily excluded. It would be to suppose knowledge, without the least foundation for that knowledge in the object. In answer it is sometimes alleged, that God's knowledge is not like ours; nor can we judge of his manner of knowing things, by what takes place among creatures. While we readily admit the general truth, we deny that it can have any application to the case before us. God cannot know that something exists where there is nothing. God cannot know that an event is certainly future, where there is, by the hypothesis, nothing seen by him which can be the cause of this certainty; or, in other words, God cannot see that an effect, yet future, will certainly be produced, if he does not know any cause of its existence. This mode of knowing things is indeed incomprehensible, but it does not involve a palpable impossibility.

But waiving this discussion, let us resume only what is granted, that if a future event be infallibly foreknown, it must be infallibly certain; as certain as any decree can make it. In this point the two theories are perfectly the same. The event is as certain as it can be; for it will be perceived by all, and must be admitted, that it is as impossible, that an event foreseen by omniscience can fail, as that a decreed event can fail. If mere certainty of existence, therefore, is inconsistent with free agency, the theory of foreknowledge is as subversive of freedom as a fixed purpose. But it is alleged, that the purpose influences the action, and, therefore, there is a wide difference. We answer, that if the divine purpose—as we maintain—has no other influence on the action than to render it certain there is no difference at all; for on some account, and for some reason, it matters not what—the thing is as certain as it can be, on the theory of mere foreknowledge. But it will be asked, how can an event be rendered absolutely certain, by a divine purpose, without rendering that event necessary? If an end is purposed and rendered certain, the means must be also put into operation, and made as certain as the end; therefore, he who purposes that a thing shall be, must be its proper and efficient cause;



for how can he otherwise give effect to his own purposes, than by putting into operation such causes as will produce the pre-determined end? And therefore that being who decrees an event, and provides for its accomplishment, must, in all reason, be considered the proper cause of it, which, when the object of the decree is a sinful action, must lead to the blasphemous consequence, that God is the author of sin. A mere purpose without efficient action cannot possibly secure the certainty of any event; therefore a decree which shall secure the certain futuration of anything, must be followed by an actual agency, which will be sufficient to accomplish the end. And if God decrees that an intelligent, voluntary being shall certainly perform an action, it is necessary to suppose that, directly or indirectly, he should exert a power to influence the actions of this voluntary agent, in which case, the being thus influenced by the controlling power of another, cannot be free and accountable.

Here we have the whole strength of the objection to absolute decrees. This is the gordian knot, which it has been found so difficult to unloose, that most men are disposed to cut it. And it must be confessed, that there seems to be something incomprehensible to us, in this thing; and perhaps, the common method of acknowledging, that human minds cannot reconcile the fixed purposes of God with the free agency of man, is best; yet it would be easy to show that the difficulty is fully as great, and even greater, on the Arminian, than the Calvinistic theory. The former, indeed, talks of conditional decrees or purposes of God, which are mere hypothetical things; a purpose to do this or that, if some other event should occur; but if this should not occur, to act differently. This, indeed, is to make the great omniscient God like ourselves. It is to represent him as dependent for his eternal purposes on creatures not in existence. But, really, this theory can afford no manner of relief: for, as God, from the beginning, knew what the actions of free creatures would be, his own purposes were as much fixed as they could be, on any other hypothesis. If a ruler determines to punish his subjects if they commit certain crimes, and is at the same time assured that they will commit them, his purpose to punish is as certainly fixed as it can be.

But before we dismiss this subject as incomprehensible, let us examine whether there is not a theory on which the divine foreknowledge and purpose may be reconciled, and on which Calvinists and Arminians may become united in their views.

Whatever plan the Almighty determined on from the beginning, or whatever purpose he formed in regard to the universe of creatures, all was done under the guidance of infinite wisdom. That God decreed, in wisdom, everything which he did purpose, is admitted by all. To form a plan for the creation, arrangement, and government of the world, supposes that out of all possible plans, that was selected which seemed best to infinite wisdom. In the order of nature, therefore, the whole congeries of creatures

and events, which compose the universe, must have been present to the Divine Mind before his purpose was formed; or to speak more correctly, all creatures, with all their relations and actions, were in the view of God's infinite understanding, when he decreed their future existence; and the whole was viewed as one connected plan or system, and was contemplated at one comprehensive glance, and all future existence was decreed by one single act. Now, whatever the nature and qualities of acts were viewed to be in the divine purpose, the same must they be in the event. If God determined that free agents should exist, and that their actions should be free, when this part of his plan is executed, free agents with their free actions will exist; and the decree, so far from being inconsistent with their freedom, is the very thing which renders it certain that such free agents and voluntary acts will ever have a being. Could not God from all eternity decree, that creatures endued with liberty should exist, and if this was his purpose, will not the event answer to it? And if such creatures exist and act, will not their actions be free? If, then, the plan of the universe adopted by infinite wisdom, included the existence of free moral agents and their free actions, such creatures and such actions must come into being, in consequence of the decree; human liberty, therefore, instead of being destroyed by the decree, is established upon an immutable basis. If God is omnipotent, and wills the existence of a free agent, the next moment, such a being would instantly start into being; if he wills that such a creature should exist six thousand years after the creation, the effect will as certainly follow, and will as exactly answer to the purpose of the divine mind. It would be very strange, indeed, if the Almighty could not effectually will the existence of a free, voluntary act: to suppose the contrary, would be to deny his omnipotence. Now, if he can decree the future existence of such an act, it will surely come to pass, agreeably to the design; that is, it will exist as a free act. Now whether we can tell how God can secure the freedom of such an act or not, we ought not to hesitate to believe that a being of infinite perfection can accomplish it. To say, then, that the decree by which the certainty of a free act is secured, violates free agency, seems very much like a contradiction in terms.

The objection, that the doctrine of absolute decrees necessarily makes God the author of sin, derives its whole force from overlooking the important fact, that there may be created agents, who are endued with the power of originating action by the very constitution of their nature; and who, although dependent on God for their existence and faculties, yet being supported in being, are capable of acting, and of acting freely. If such creatures did not exist, there neither would be, nor could be, any such thing as moral agency; and consequently, no such thing as praise or blame. But if God accomplishes his purposes by creating such agents, who are free and voluntary in their actions, and capable of doing right or wrong, it is not sound logic to infer, that the moral qualities of

their actions must be ascribed to him. They are answerable for their own acts. If such active, accountable beings be created—and why should we doubt it—their actions ought not to be ascribed to the Creator.

But still the difficulty occurs, that if God positively decrees that such creatures shall perform certain acts; to execute this purpose, it is necessary to suppose that he exerts an influence, mediately or immediately, on their minds: and if a superior being causes one dependent on him to perform certain actions, the latter, it is thought, cannot be accountable for such acts.

There are two methods of answering this objection. We first admit the fact, that God does exert his power in the production of all the acts of creatures, by such a concurrence with them, that the physical part of the act is the effect of his agency, but so far as it is of a sinful nature it is their own. Thus it is acknowledged that God is the efficient cause of our free acts, considered merely as acts of intellect or will; but at the same time the act of the creature determines the moral quality of the thing done. This is the distinction invented by the schoolmen, and adopted by most Calvinistic theologians of former days; and which they attempt to illustrate by various comparisons. It is, however, a distinction not easily understood; and has never been so explained as to remove the darkness and perplexity in which the subject is involved. For, if God is the efficient cause of the action, as it is an act of the mind, and if he determines its physical nature, it does not appear that anything is left for the creature, but to yield: the physical part of an act is the substance of that act, and its morality is the relation which it bears to something else. Now, although we may conceive of an act as purely a mental energy, without taking into view any of its relations; yet when such an act is produced in the mind of man, who stands in certain relations to God and his fellow creatures; and is under a moral law, which measures and estimates the moral character of every act; it does not appear how we can admit that it is as to its substance the effect of divine power, and yet as to its morality the act of the creature.

Others come up directly to the difficulty, and maintain that God is the author of sin, or the efficient cause of sin, but that there is nothing of the nature of sin in him. They allege, that there is no necessity that what God makes should be like himself; or that he should possess the qualities and attributes of his creatures. God creates matter, but he is not therefore material. He creates poisonous reptiles, but who would think of inferring that, on this account, he possesses properties answering to this? So God may be the author of sinful acts in creatures, and not be, in any degree, a partaker of sin. It is, moreover, alleged, that we are so constituted, that we judge of the morality of actions without any reference to their cause. If a man is conscious of a voluntary exercise, forbidden by the law of God, conscience immediately pronounces sentence of condemnation, without the least regard to the cause.



We feel guilty on account of a wrong choice, however that volition may have been produced in our minds. Free agency, according to this theory, consists in voluntary action alone; and for all such exercises we are accountable. There is, therefore, no inconsistency whatever between the divine purpose and free agency. This theory has many advocates in our country, and is considered an improvement of the old Calvinistic theology. But it is repugnant to common sense; and the arguments employed in its defence are sophistical.

For, in the first place, reasoning from the effect to the cause is one of the most clear and logical methods of demonstrating truth which we possess, and if it were abolished, almost all useful reasoning would be at an end. By the works of creation we prove conclusively, that God is wise, and powerful, and benevolent, because we can see manifest indications of these attributes in the creatures. We do not, indeed, conclude from such reasoning, that there is a perfect resemblance in the thing made to the Creator, which is impossible; but we legitimately infer from effects which could not be such as they are, unless their cause was powerful, wise, and benevolent. There must be in the cause that which will account for the effect: and when a free intelligent agent is the cause, his character may be known as far as his design in the effect is manifest. If these principles are not admitted, and it should be denied that the nature of a cause can be determined from its effects, then it would follow that an evil being may have created this world; and that a superior excellence to any that existed in the cause, might be in an effect. Now, if the evidence of goodness in the constitution of creatures proves that God is good; if he is the author of sin the conclusion would be as legitimate, that evil exists in him, which is blasphemous. But it is said, that though sin in itself be evil, yet God in producing it has a good end in view; and then we establish the principle, that it is consistent with infinite purity to do evil, that good may come; and if this is consistent with divine perfection, it is also with human virtue; but such a principle is severely reprehended in the word of God.

By some writers, the difficulty is got over by what may properly be called a metaphysical quibble. They reason thus. There can be no sin before the first sin; he, therefore, who is the author of sin, cannot be sinful, for that would be to suppose that sin existed before it did exist; that is, sin before the first sin. Now, if such sophistry deserves an answer, it may be briefly given thus. When we speak of God as the author of sin, the meaning is, sin in the creature; and when of the first sin, we mean the first sin of man; but if it be true that God, by an immediate agency, produces this sin in man, the consequence would be, that moral evil in man or any other creature, is not the only or the first evil, of that kind, since it must have had a previous existence in the cause of these sinful acts of the creature. A parallel case is this: God is the author of holiness, but if holiness be produced by God, then it did

not exist before it was produced ; and thus we come to the impious conclusion, that because God is the author of holiness, there is no holiness in him, otherwise, holiness existed before it was produced, that is, before it did exist.

Again, if God produces, by his Almighty power, all the evil thoughts and purposes which arise in the mind of the sinner, they are not properly the acts of the sinner, but of him who produces them. It is, indeed, said, that God acts upon us to cause us to act, and that the act is properly our own, if it be our feeling or volition, and it matters not how it was produced. The judgment of conscience is, that the man is guilty of whatever he wills improperly, however that will may have been produced in him. As was mentioned before, they insist that we have nothing to do with the cause of an act, in judging of its moral nature. If, on our part, it is voluntary, that is enough : the sin is as much our own as it can be ; and the appeal is made to our own consciousness of what passes within our minds, when we pass sentence of condemnation upon ourselves. Now, there is some truth in this statement, which gives plausibility to the whole. It is true, that when we are conscious of an evil purpose, we immediately experience a sense of guilt, without any inquiry after the origin of this volition ; but why is this, but because we take it for granted, in all our judgments respecting our sins, that they are our own acts. And if men could be convinced that God was the author of all their sinful acts, they would cease to feel that they were accountable for them. Men, commonly, do not believe in their own existence more fairly, than in the fact, that their thoughts are the actions of their own souls, and that they originate in the activity of their own minds. We do not deny the power of God to produce what he pleases in any mind, but if he produces evil, the creature is excusable, for who can resist omnipotence ? Who can think anything else, upon this hypothesis, than what is created within him ? But an attempt has been made to show that God may produce sin in the creature, and the acts remain sinful, because it is admitted, by all who believe in the operations of grace, that he works in all his people, both “to will and to do.” If then the holy exercises of the pious are produced by the agency of God, and yet these are holy exercises, and are felt by the saints to be their own ; then there is no reason why he may not work in sinners all their sinful exercises, and yet they be their own sins. To which we would reply, that sin is sin by whomsoever produced. As was said before, we do not deny the power of God to produce evil in the sinner’s mind ; but we deny that it is consistent with his holiness. The question now, however, is, whether the sinner can be justly punished for evil thoughts wrought in his heart by Almighty power. And we are willing to admit the parallel brought for illustration, and when extended to its proper length, it will overthrow the cause which it was brought to support. When God works in his people to make them willing to love and obey him, is the praise of their exercises of grace due

to them? Do they not universally ascribe all the praise to God, saying, Not unto us, &c.? They feel that if such acts are rewarded, it is a mere matter of favour. Look, then, at the other side of the parallel. When God works in the hearts of the wicked to do evil, the blame is not to be ascribed to them, but to him who is the true author of their exercises; and they deserve no punishment for such acts, unless God should choose, gratuitously or arbitrarily, to inflict punishment on them.

And if God can create an active being, we mean one essentially active, capable of originating action, why have recourse to other efficient causes to account for the existence of the free actions of such creatures? Some writers assume it as a maxim, that no creature can act without the physical efficient energy of God co-operating, to give him the ability to put forth the act; or as it is more simply expressed by the abettors of the last-mentioned theory, no creature can act but as it is acted on. But we deny that this is a self-evident truth; and we are sure it never can be demonstrated. It is freely admitted that every creature is continually sustained in existence, and in the possession of its faculties, by the power of God; but if that creature be in its very essence active, it is evident from the premises, that nothing more is necessary to cause it to act, than to continue its existence. According to our theory, therefore, the efficient cause of free actions is to be looked for nowhere else but in the free agents themselves; except in special cases where God may choose, for wise and good ends, supernaturally to operate on their minds. And if there be no necessity of introducing other causes of free and voluntary actions, why should we encumber the subject more deeply with the doctrine of divine efficiency or concurrence in the performance of sinful acts. No distinctions, however nice, will ever be sufficient to guard that system from the shocking consequence of making God the author of sin.

But it is feared, that the theory which we defend will make the creature independent of the Creator; there is no reason for apprehension, as we not only admit that the power of God is, every moment, necessary for the sustenance of the creature, but we maintain that every action of the creature will be accordant with his eternal purpose. To obtain a distinct view of this subject, it is requisite to recall to mind a few undeniable principles. The first is, that in the production of creatures, God acts wisely, or as a being of intelligence; like finite beings, God has no need to deliberate, compare, and reason, but he perceives instinctively all possible things with all their possible relations. In wisdom he made all things that are made. Every minute part of every animal and of every vegetable was wisely ordained to occupy its appropriate place, and suited to answer its appropriate end. The whole system, in the various relations of one part to another, was arranged and adjusted in infinite wisdom. This supposes that the whole existed in idea before the infinite mind when



his purpose was formed to give it existence. In this plan free agents formed a part; these, with all their actions, also, were contemplated previously (in the order of nature) to the decree which determined their future existence to be certain.

Again, in selecting his plan, the great Creator acted with perfect freedom. He was under no necessity to create anything. He is independent of all creatures, and stands in need of nothing. Not only was he at perfect liberty to create or not, but he was free to adopt any system which pleased him. If there had been anything in the existing plan which did not please him, or would not answer his purpose perfectly, he was at liberty to reject the whole, and would have done so. When he purposed to create the progenitor of the human family, he had it in his power to have given existence to another of the same species: he might, for example, have made the last man first; or have formed a person distinct from any who ever shall actually exist. Now this being the case, the inquiry arises, could not God have placed at the head of the human family, on whom the destiny of the rest should depend, one who would not have sinned? If he could not: if every creature that could have been created of the human species would certainly have sinned as well as Adam, then it follows eventually that sin could not be avoided if man existed; and the conclusion is, that a determination to create man involved in it the purpose to permit the existence of sin. But if the alternative be taken, and it be said, that God could have created, in the place of Adam, one who would not have sinned, still the same conclusion forces itself upon us; for if, when he might have formed a creature who would not have transgressed, he chose to form one whom he knew would, it is as evident as anything can be, that by this selection he did determine to permit the existence of sin.

Let us now, for a moment, examine the theory which supposes that the plan of the Almighty, as it originally existed in the eternal mind, is not the one which is actually in existence; but that while it was his purpose that evil should have no place in the universe, contrary to his will and plan, it has come in through the transgression of free agents; and that in consequence of this a new plan has been adopted, accommodated to the exigence of the case. If we understand the Arminian theory, this is the point by which it stands distinguished from the theory which we believe. The mere statement of this opinion seems to us to carry with it a confutation. For, when the original plan was formed and adopted, according to the premises, it was certainly known that it would utterly fail; and was it ever heard of among creatures, that any intelligent being seriously formed a purpose which he knew at the time could not and would not be accomplished? To suppose, then, that God, with a perfect prescience of all future events, resolved upon a plan of the universe entirely different from what he knew would come to pass, is a scheme so unreasonable, that we know not how any one, after distinctly considering it, can adopt it: and we seem to our-

selves now to perceive the reason why some speculative Arminians have been driven to the theory mentioned above, that God did not choose to know what would really take place.

But passing by the inconsistency of this theory on account of these reasons, let us see to what consequences it will lead us. The hypothesis is, that the present state of the world does not accord with the original plan of the Almighty ; but that by the introduction of sin against his will, the whole state of the moral world is changed, and of course the government of the world by providence must be entirely different from what it would have been if man had not sinned. One undeniable consequence is, that the end which God had in view in the creation is lost, unless we suppose that his glory can be promoted as well by a state of things which prostrates his own plan, as by its execution. But if the ruler of the universe was frustrated in his purpose by the first sin, so he must be by every subsequent transgression ; and, therefore, the existence of creatures, instead of answering his original purpose, whether that was to make them happy or to promote his own glory, has entirely failed of its complete accomplishment. And if this has occurred by the actual course of events in time past, what security is there, that the same will not be the fact in time to come ? yea, what security is there, that things will not continue to grow worse and worse, until all nature shall rush to some dreadful catastrophe, in which everything good in the creation shall be utterly lost in everlasting darkness and confusion ?

It will not be satisfactory to answer, that God has wisdom and power sufficient to prevent such a catastrophe ; for his wisdom and power, according to the hypothesis, are not adequate to the prevention of sin and its consequences ; and if these may arise and spread and increase, how can the consequence supposed be prevented ? If the plan of the Almighty Ruler of the universe may be thwarted in one instance, it may in all. No security for the final well-being of the universe can be found anywhere. Now is it reasonable to think that, on these principles, a God of infinite wisdom would ever have made creatures capable of frustrating all his plans, and disappointing all his most benevolent purposes ?

But it may be alleged, that God, foreseeing the evil which would arise from the abuse of free will, determined to provide against it, and accordingly has done so, by sending his son into the world to repair the ruins which sin has made ; and thus, although God will not be glorified according to his original design, he will, nevertheless, be honoured by the new remedial scheme. The ground of the objection, however, still remains. If God's first plan was entirely frustrated by the sin of his creatures, what security is there that the same will not happen in relation to this new plan ? As the will of man is still free, and as the success of the mediatorial scheme depends on the choice of man, why may it not happen that the end aimed at in the second will also be frustrated ? Indeed, according to this theory, the fact has already occurred ; for the

design of God in sending his Son was to save all men, but it is acknowledged, that only a small part of the human race has been brought to salvation hitherto. And there is no better hope for the future, for men are not better now than formerly, and judging from the past, we may conjecture, that the greater number will continue to neglect this great salvation. Hence it appears, that the great God has been disconcerted and disappointed in all his designs: not only was his original plan of a universe without sin frustrated, but his remedial plan, which was to save all men from sin, has also failed. These are consequences which inevitably flow from the hypothesis, that the cause of events in the world is not in accordance with the original plan of the Creator. But it is impossible, after an impartial view of the divine attributes, to believe in these conclusions. They are repugnant to reason. They are dishonourable to the divine perfections.

It may be, however, that the sober Arminian will be disposed to take different ground, and to maintain that God did, with the prescience of all his sins, determine to create man; and that the existing state of things he did resolve to permit; but that he decreed nothing respecting these actions, but left them free; so that when the creature sins, he is not under any necessity of doing wrong from any divine purpose. Now, here it is evident, again, that there is an idea attached to the doctrine of decrees which does not belong to it, and which we have heretofore laboured to separate from it. It is, that if their sinful actions are decreed, they cannot be free, and must come to pass by an unavoidable necessity. To remove all difficulty, however, on this account, we will agree to meet the Arminian on the ground last selected. And we do aver, that in this theory he comes substantially into the very doctrine which we maintain. For if God formed man with the full certainty of all his sins, then the purpose to create such a being with a foresight of such acts, is virtually decreeing the future existence of such acts. If, when the purpose was formed to create Adam, his fall was distinctly foreseen, then the determination to give Adam existence involved the purpose that such an act as his transgression should also exist. Not that God intended or needed to do anything to cause man to sin; this we reject, as much as the Arminian: but he resolved to *permit* this event. And here is the true ground of distinction between effective and permissive decrees; in the execution of the first, God acts himself; but in the execution of the last, other agents act, and act freely, and without constraint.

It does appear, therefore, that there is a ground on which the sober Arminian and moderate Calvinist can meet; and on which even their views of the divine decrees can be made to harmonize.



# THE EARLY HISTORY OF PELAGIANISM.

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WITH propriety the term militant has been applied to the church upon earth. No sooner was the light of truth sent down from heaven, than it fell into interminable conflict with the darkness of error. And not only was it necessary to contend with the powers of darkness without the kingdom of Christ, but hideous forms of error were generated within the bosom of the church; according to the prophetic warning of our Saviour, "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing;" and that of the apostle Paul, in his solemn valedictory to the elders of Ephesus, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Even while Paul lived, the churches were exceedingly disturbed and distracted by false teachers, who brought in "another gospel," and endeavoured to overthrow from the foundation the doctrine of gratuitous justification by faith without works; and to substitute a legal system, according to which justification before God could be expected only from obedience to the ceremonial law of Moses. A large portion of the inspired writings of this apostle have direct reference to the opinions of these Judaizing heretics. Others arose in the church who denied the resurrection of the body, and maintained that all the resurrection to be expected was already past. They seem to have explained all that our Lord had said respecting the resurrection spiritually, or as relating to the purification or revivification of the soul. As the former errorists manifestly came out from the sect of the Pharisees, the latter might have derived their origin from the Sadducees, or from some of the schools of heathen philosophy. From these facts in the history of the apostolic church, we learn, that when converts were made to the society of Christians, many of them retained something of the leaven of their old errors, and endeavoured to modify and corrupt the pure doctrines of the Gospel, by accommodating them to their preconceived opinions. And as all the first Christians had been brought up in another religion, it is not wonderful that errors abounded among those professing Christianity, even in the times of

the apostles. This is, indeed, contrary to the vulgar opinion, which considers the primitive church as being in all respects near perfection. This opinion, however, is not founded on any information given to us in the apostolic writings; for, in addition to what has already been observed, we may refer to the epistles of our Lord to the seven churches of Asia, for further proof of the existence and prevalence of error in the days of the apostles. And towards the close of that age, the impudence and licentiousness of the propagators of error may be learned from the catholic epistles of John, the second of Peter, and the epistle of Jude; all of which are filled with descriptions of false teachers, and warnings against their pestiferous influence.

Of the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, our information is very imperfect; either because there were few who had leisure or inclination for writing; or because their works have perished; which we know to have been the fact in regard to some important records. But from all the authentic history which has reached our times, we learn that swarms of heretics infested the church, even while she was struggling under the direful strokes of sanguinary persecution. No age has produced more monstrous errors than the second century, of which Irenaeus has given us a detailed account: and all this congeries of extravagant opinions originated in the false philosophy of those who professed to embrace Christianity. The loathsome spawn of Gnosticism was cast upon the church from the corrupt but fertile source of the oriental philosophy. The original fountain of this extraordinary inundation of absurd heresy, was a fanciful doctrine of the nature of God. It would be interesting to pursue this subject, but we are admonished by the narrowness of our limits to forbear.

It does not appear, however, that, amidst the multifarious errors which were broached in the first four centuries, any controversy arose respecting the doctrines of *sin* and *grace*. In regard to the person of the Mediator, error had assumed almost every possible shape, both as it related to his humanity and divinity, and the nature and effects of the union between them. Council after council had been convened to discuss and decide on points connected with this important subject; and theologians of the first learning and highest reputation employed their pens in defence of the catholic doctrine.

But early in the fifth century, a new doctrine began to be published by Pelagius, a British monk, on the subject of man's natural condition, and the connection which subsisted between Adam and his posterity. That the doctrine of Pelagius was new, and different from the opinions which had commonly been received in the church, needs no other proof than the impression which it made on the minds of the great majority of learned theologians who lived at that time. And that the doctrine of original sin then received by the church, was the same which had been always held from the times of the apostles, is exceedingly probable, from the fact that the

subject never underwent any public discussion ; while it is rarely the case that a doctrine entirely new can be introduced and propagated everywhere, without giving rise to much controversy, and exciting much public attention. Pelagius did, indeed, in his controversy with Augustine, allege, that this father had invented the doctrine of original sin, which was unknown to preceding ages ; but in answer to this charge, Augustine appealed to many writers of the first ages, to show that they entertained the same views as those which he now advocated. These testimonies are not so explicit as could be collected from the writings of those who lived after the discussion of this subject took place. But this is always the case. When any point of doctrine is undisputed and received by all, while it is everywhere tacitly admitted or incidentally referred to, it is never made the subject of accurate definition ; nor is it expounded with that fulness and caution which become necessary after it has been called in question or opposed. When Augustine was urged to bring forward proofs from the fathers who preceded him, he answered the demand in the following sensible manner : “ Quid igitur opus est ut eorum scrutemur opuscula, qui priusquam ipsa hæresis oriretur, non habuerunt necessitatem in hac difficili ad solvendum quaestione versari, quod proculdubio facerent si respondere talibus cogerentur ? ” That is, “ What occasion is there that we should search the works of those, who, living before this heresy arose, had no necessity of handling this difficult question, which doubtless they would have done, if they had been obliged to answer such men as we have to deal with ? ”

Jerome, in several places in his works, ascribes the new opinions propagated by Pelagius to Rufin, who, he alleges, borrowed them from Origen : but as Jerome is known to have cherished an implacable hostility to Rufin, and also to the memory of Origen, his testimony on this subject ought to be received with caution. And we cannot find that he brings forward any passages from the writings of Rufin which are sufficient to gain credit to the allegation against him.

Pelagius is admitted, by his keenest opposers, to have been a man of learning, and of estimable character. And on other points, especially on the warmly-contested doctrine of the Trinity, he not only was orthodox, but wrote three books in defence of the catholic opinion, in which he gave deserved praise to Athanasius for his great constancy and soundness in the faith, and did not hesitate to pronounce the opinions of Arius impious. He, moreover, published fourteen books, containing an exposition of the epistles of Paul ; which, in the opinion of several learned men, are still extant in the commentaries subjoined to those of Jerome on Paul's epistles. One thing is certain in relation to these commentaries ; they do not contain the opinions of Jerome on the subject of original sin, but precisely those of Pelagius. Besides the books already mentioned, he wrote many letters to distinguished individuals, most of which are lost ; and also a book, *De Natura*, in which he extols the powers



and virtues of human nature; and a small book addressed to Pope Innocent, containing a confession of the catholic faith, as he had received it. But it was a complaint against him by some of his contemporaries, that he left it to his disciples principally to write, so that he might have the opportunity, when he judged it expedient, of denying that the opinions published by them were his own. Yet, on the whole, it cannot be denied that the reputation of Pelagius stood high in the church before he began to propagate his heretical opinions. Jerome, who was never inclined to spare his adversaries, seems to have respected him, for in his first piece against his opinions he refrains from mentioning his name, but speaks of himself under the fictitious name of Atticus, and of his adversary by the name of Clitobulus. Another writer of that age, who seemed solicitous to speak evil of Pelagius, found nothing to hold up to censure or ridicule but his bodily defects. Augustine acknowledges that he was a man of chaste and unblemished character; and Chrysostom laments that a man of so great probity should have fallen into heresy.

But, although Pelagius was the author of the system which has been denominated from him, yet some of his disciples were much more distinguished in the defence and propagation of these opinions. Among these, the most celebrated was Celestius. Augustine admits that he was a man of most penetrating genius. Before he became a follower of Pelagius, he published three small treatises, addressed to his parents, in the form of epistles, which contained nothing erroneous, but were full of incitements to a virtuous life. What he wrote afterwards, we know only from the citations and references of Augustine, and others of his opponents. When he was condemned by the council of Carthage, he travelled into Asia, where, it is said, he was ordained a presbyter, and afterwards took up his residence in Sicily, where he continued by his discourses and writings to propagate the doctrines of Pelagius.

Julian, an Italian bishop, the son of Memorius, bishop of Capua, was, however, the most zealous and able writer in favour of the opinions of Pelagius. When quite a young man he was known to Augustine and greatly beloved by him, as appears from a letter which he addressed to the father of Julian. This young man was so rich in mental endowments, and possessed of an eloquence so commanding and persuasive, that he received the appellation of the Roman Demosthenes. And from what remains of his controversial works, it is manifest that he had a mind of uncommon vigour and penetration. The character given of him by Gemadius of Marseilles, is, "That he was a man of a penetrating genius, learned in the scriptures, and an accurate scholar both in the Greek and Latin languages." Before he embraced the impious doctrine of Pelagius, he was distinguished among the doctors of the church. Afterwards, he undertook the defence of the Pelagian errors against Augustine; first in a work consisting of four books, and then in another work of eight books. He is said also to have writ-

ten a work in the form of a dialogue, in which the parties in this controversy are introduced as defending their respective opinions. But Gennadius, and others who followed him, are entirely mistaken in ascribing this dialogue, or *disputation*, to Julian. It is the production of Augustine, who selects from the eight books of Julian the arguments which are there used in favour of Pelagianism, and then answers them in his own name. The title of this disputation is *Altercatio Amborum*. The occasion of writing this book Augustine himself has informed us of in his own preface, where he says that an illustrious man sent him certain extracts which some person had made from the books of Julian, the Pelagian heretic, and requested that he would give an answer, "To these," says he, "I now return an answer, first setting down the very words of Julian and then subjoining my answers to each particular in order."

Julian also indited two letters, which were published; the one addressed to Zosimus, bishop of Rome, the other, in the name of eighteen bishops who united with him, to Rufus, bishop of Thessalonica. The venerable Bede, in his commentary on the Song of Solomon, mentions and refutes a work of Julian on the same subject. Julian prefixed to his exposition of the Canticles a work entitled *De Amore*, in which he labours to prove that there is implanted in all men, a natural principle of love, which continues from infancy to old age, and is preserved, without loss of vigour, by mere human exertion.

He wrote, moreover, a book concerning the virtue of constancy, and an epistle to Demetrius; in both of which, according to Bede, he defended the Pelagian doctrine of free-will.

Pelagius came to Rome about A.D. 410, when Innocent, the bishop, was absent in consequence of the capture of the city by Alaric, and there began to scatter the seeds of his doctrine, under the specious veil of certain interrogatories which he proposed for consideration and discussion. Cœlestius, in Sicily, pursued the same policy and about the same time. Not long after this, both Pelagius and Cœlestius passed over to Africa, but Pelagius did not long continue there, but travelled on to Asia Minor. By this time the rumour of his heresy was spread abroad; Jerome in the east, and Augustine in the west, had taken up their pens against what they considered a pestiferous doctrine. A council was therefore called at Diospolis, or Lydda, in Palestine, and fourteen bishops met to investigate the doctrines of Pelagius. Everything here was as favourable to him as he could have wished; for neither of the two bishops who were his accusers were present; and as the writings of Pelagius were in the Latin language, his judges were totally incompetent to form an accurate judgment of his doctrines, for want of a correct knowledge of the Latin tongue. Moreover, John, bishop of Jerusalem, warmly espoused the cause of Pelagius, and he was without difficulty acquitted of the charge of heresy, and received by the assembled bishops as an orthodox brother.

The presbyter Orosius, coming to Carthage from Palestine,

brought with him the accusation preferred against Pelagius by Herus and Lazarus, and communicated this document to a council then sitting at Carthage, on the affairs of the church. The bishops there assembled before they heard of the decision of the council of Diospolis were much alarmed, and wrote to Innocent, of Rome, their view of the opinions of Pelagius; adding, that if he and his partisans did not unequivocally reject these errors they ought to be immediately excommunicated. These resolutions were signed by sixty-eight bishops. Another synod met shortly afterwards at Milevum, in Numidia, and addressed letters on the same subject to the bishop of Rome. The result of the eastern council being now known in Africa, Augustine, Alypius, and Aurelius, with two other bishops, wrote a more full and particular account of the whole controversy to Innocent, and explained how the council of Diospolis had most probably been imposed on by the subtilty of Pelagius. Innocent entered fully into the views of the African bishops, and in his answer expressed the same conditional condemnation of the authors of the heresy. But as Pelagius had diffused his doctrine extensively, and put on it a fair face, it was necessary that he should be met with argument, as well as decisions of councils: and no man in the church was so well qualified for this work as Augustine, who did not shrink from the arduous task, but entered into this field of controversy, in which he was occupied for twenty years.

Pelagius gloried greatly in his acquittal; on which occasion he wrote to a friend, that fourteen bishops had agreed with him that man might live without sin, and easily keep the commandments of God if he would. He also wrote to Augustine an account of his acquittal; and immediately proceeded to publish his opinions more boldly, in four books which he wrote on the subject of free-will, and in which he entirely denied the doctrine of original sin.

The first thing which Augustine wrote expressly against the opinions of Pelagius, was three books addressed to Marcellinus, *Concerning the demerit and remission of sins, and the baptism of children*. In these, Pelagius is treated very respectfully, because Augustine still believed him to be a pious man, and because his reputation in the church was very high. In these books, Augustine said that it was possible for a man, by the aids of divine grace, to live without sin, but that no one had ever yet attained to that perfection, or ever would in time to come. At this opinion, Marcellinus expressed some surprise; which gave occasion to Augustine to write another book, *Concerning the Letter and Spirit*, in which he keenly contends with the opposers of the doctrine of grace.

As Pelagius had now, by means of his letter to Demetrius, made known his opinions, and spread them abroad, Augustine did not any longer consider it necessary to forbear mentioning his name; he therefore provided an antidote to the aforesaid letter, in an epistle addressed to Juliana, the mother of Demetrius, which is numbered 143 in the *Collection* of his epistles.

In the year 414 he seems to have written his famous work, *De*



*Natura et Gratia*, which he dedicated to two young gentlemen, Timasius and Jacobus, who had recently been converted, from being disciples of Pelagius, to the catholic faith. These two young men had been induced by the persuasions of Pelagius to devote themselves to a monastic life, and at the same time drank in his self-righteous spirit; but by the exertions of Augustine they were brought back to the acknowledgment of the truth.

In the following year, 415, Augustine wrote a particular account of the proceedings in relation to Pelagius which had taken place in the council of Palestine, and addressed it to Aurelius, bishop of Carthage.

In the year 416 the council of Carthage met and addressed a letter to Innocent; and Augustine, in addition, wrote one in his own name and that of several of his friends, Aurelius, Alypius, Euodeus and Possidius. As Augustine had already commenced writing against Pelagius, a request was made by this council that he should go on with the controversy; in consequence of which he published this year two books; the one *Concerning the Grace of Christ*, the other *Concerning Original Sin*.

About this time, also, it is supposed that his letter to Dardanus was written, which is numbered fifty-seven in the collection of his epistles, and, moreover, his book against Cœlestius, addressed to the Bishops Eutropius and Paulus, *Concerning the Perfection of Righteousness*.

In the year 417, Augustine, having heard that there were some persons at Nola who had imbibed the doctrine of Pelagius, wrote to Paulinus, bishop of that place, *Concerning the Pelagian heresy*, which letter is the one hundred and sixth in the collection.

In 418 he wrote two epistles to the Roman presbyter, Sixtus, one of which was intended as an express refutation of the Pelagian heresy.

Thus it appears how indefatigable this father was in opposing the heresy of Pelagius. Almost every one of the above works is particularly mentioned in *The Retractations of Augustine*.

Innocent, bishop of Rome, dying about this time, was succeeded by Zosimus, to whom both Pelagius and Cœlestius addressed epistles, in which they gave such a complexion to their system, and spoke in language so plausible and ambiguous, that Zosimus was completely deceived by their fair speeches. He accordingly wrote to the bishops of Africa that he considered Pelagius an orthodox man. But they showed in their answer that it was not enough for these men to acknowledge the truth in general terms; but that they should explicitly confess that we need the grace of Jesus Christ in every act. Zosimus did not remain obstinate, but upon receiving accurate information from Augustine of the true nature of the opinions of these men, issued a sentence of condemnation against them.

Upon this, the Emperor Honorius also passed a sentence of banishment from Rome against the Pelagians. This was in the year 418. Cœlestius, on being condemned, went to Constantinople

where he met with determined opposition from Atticus, the bishop of that city ; so that his designs of propagating his opinions there were disappointed.

Pelagius still continued in Palestine, and complained grievously of the hard treatment which he received by the decisions and acts respecting him at Rome, and by the books written against him ; and again succeeded in imposing on some respectable persons who held a conference with him, by leading them to think that his doctrine did not materially differ from the common belief. These persons, on whom he made this impression, were so much interested in his favour that they wrote to Augustine stating their favourable views of the doctrine of Pelagius. This communication seems to have been the occasion of Augustine's writing his books *Concerning Grace and Original Sin*.

Julian, of whom we have already spoken, having published severe animadversions on the conduct of Zosimus and his clergy, Boniface, the successor of Zosimus, sent them to Augustine, for the purpose of having them refuted ; which he did in four books, inscribed to Boniface. And Count Valerius, having received another of Julian's writings, in which he charges the Catholics with condemning marriage, deriving this as an inference from their doctrine of original sin, caused this work to be sent to Augustine, who soon published an answer in his work *De Nuptiis et Concupiscentia*.

To this work Julian replied in four books. To these Augustine opposed six books ; in the first three of which he answers what is contained in Julian's first book ; but the fourth, fifth and sixth, are employed in refuting the second, third and fourth of Julian ; the one answering to the other in order. Julian was not a man to be easily silenced, for he now came out with eight books against the six of Augustine. These the venerable polemic was preparing to answer, when he was called away from all his earthly labours. Only two books of this last work were completed ; these have come down to us with his other works.

The death of Augustine occurred, according to the testimony of Prosper, in his *Chronicon*, A. D. 430 ; the latter was the friend and correspondent of Augustine, from whom this father received particular information of the progress of Pelagianism, or rather Semi-Pelagianism, at Marseilles, where these opinions took deep root, and continued long to flourish.

It may be satisfactory now to give a more particular account of the decisions of the several councils which met for the consideration of this subject, in their chronological order.

The first was the council of Carthage, convened, A.D. 407, on account of the dissemination by Cælestius of the opinions of Pelagius, which also he pertinaciously defended. Of the proceedings of this council no fragment remains but one preserved in Augustine's work on original sin. Mention is made of this council, however, in the letter of the fathers of the second council of Carthage, addressed to Innocent. From the fragment preserved by Augus-

tine, we learn that the accusation against Cœlestius was, that he had taught "that the sin of Adam hurt himself alone." Cœlestius acknowledged that he had doubted concerning the communication of sin by descent from Adam, but professed his willingness to be better instructed by those to whom God had given greater wisdom; yet observed that he had heard from presbyters of the church a doctrine different from that which was held by the council. And being called upon to name one from whom he had heard such an opinion, he mentioned Rufin, a holy presbyter of Rome. On being asked whether he had not asserted that infants are born in the same state in which Adam was before transgression, he would make no other reply but "that infants needed baptism, and ought to be baptized."

The council of Diospolis, in Palestine, consisted, as has been mentioned before, of only fourteen bishops. The accusers of Pelagius were not able to attend; one of them being prevented by sickness, and the other by some other cause.

Augustine mentions this council in several of his works, and ascribes the acquittal of Pelagius to his artful use of equivocal terms, by which his judges were deceived, and were induced to pronounce him innocent.

Jerome, in his seventy-ninth epistle, calls this "a miserable synod;" and says, that although they did not err in doctrine, they were deceived in the man, who deceitfully seemed to condemn his own opinions. Photius, in his *Bibliotheca*, gives a more particular account of this council; but his information seems to have been derived from the works of Augustine, already referred to.

A. D. 416. Another council met at Carthage, which has already been noticed; not convened, indeed, to attend to this controversy, but Prosius, having brought intelligence respecting the proceedings instituted against Pelagius in Palestine, the fathers of this council took up the business, and wrote a letter to Innocent, in which they expressed their opinion freely and fully, relative to the heresy of the opinions of which Pelagius was accused, and of the course which ought to be pursued in regard to him, if he did not explicitly abjure them. Sixty-seven pastors were present at this synod.

About the same time, or a little later, a synod met at Milevum, in Numidia, consisting of sixty bishops, or pastors, who took up the subject of the errors of Pelagius and Cœlestius, and, in imitation of the council of Carthage, addressed a letter to Innocent, bishop of Rome.

It appears from several notices in the writings of Augustine, that another full synod met in Africa, and addressed letters on this subject to Zosimus, the successor of Innocent; but all traces of the acts and proceedings of this council, except the short notices referred to above, have disappeared. This synod is said to have consisted of two hundred and twenty-four bishops, and is supposed to



have been held, A. D. 417 or 418. But great obscurity rests upon the whole matter.

A. D. 428. When Cœlestinus was bishop of Rome, a council was held in Gaul, occasioned by a deputation from Britain, who represented that the poison of Pelagianism had been imported into that country by one Agricola, the son of Jenerianus, a bishop; and that they greatly needed aid to prevent its diffusion among the people. On this occasion a large council convened, and two eminent men, Germanus and Lupus, were sent on a mission to Britain to check the progress of Pelagianism. By their exertions the catholic doctrine appeared to be everywhere restored; but no sooner had they taken their departure than heresy began again to germinate; so that the request to the Gallican church for help was repeated, and Germanus was again sent, and was accompanied by Severus, a disciple of Lupus, his former colleague. The witnesses for these facts are Constantius, in his life of Germanus, and Bede, in his History of the British Churches,

The next council in which the subject of Pelagianism was brought up for consideration, was that of Ephesus, A.D. 431. This is called an œcumenical council. It was convened, not on account of the heresy of Pelagius, but to condemn Nestorianism; but as the followers of Pelagius would not join in the censure of Nestorius, the council expressed their disapprobation of that heresy also, which they denominate *the wicked doctrine of Cœlestius*. And in their synodical epistle to Cœlestinus, bishop of Rome, they approve of the sentence of condemnation which had been passed on Pelagius, Cœlestius, Julian, and their abettors, whom they call impious men.

The Pelagian doctrine was next condemned in a council which met at Arles, in France; the exact year is not settled. This synod denounced an anathema against the impious doctrines of Pelagius; and especially against the opinion *that man was born without sin; and that he could be saved by his own exertions*. They considered it a presumption worthy to be condemned for any man to believe that he could be saved without grace.

The council of Lyons met soon after that of Arles, and approved its decrees; but some other doctrines were also brought under consideration and subjected to censure.

A.D. 494. Gelasius, bishop of Rome, convened a council of seventy bishops in that city, by whom the writings of Augustine and Prosper were approved and recommended; while those of the semi-Pelagians, Cassian and Faustus, were censured.

Other councils were held in after ages, which condemned the Pelagian heresy; but our object now is to give a view of this controversy in its first rise in the fifth century.

Before we proceed to give a view of the opinions entertained and propagated by Pelagius and his followers, it will be satisfactory to ascertain what were the opinions of the church on this subject.

The doctrine of the church, then, on the subject of original sin, may be thus stated. It has ever been the judgment of the catholic church, that the first sin of Adam was imputed to all his posterity by the righteous appointment of God, and that its effects are transmitted to all his children; which effects, the church always believed were, that they were born destitute of original righteousness, subject to the sentence of death, and ~~obnoxious~~ to eternal separation from God.

Man being created in the image of God and being fully endued with all powers necessary for obedience; and, moreover, being blessed with everything requisite for his comfort, did transgress the law of his Maker by disobeying that commandment which was given as a test of his whole obedience.

This first act of transgression, it is true, was the criminal act of Adam as an individual; but as he was the root and principle of our whole nature, it may be considered the sin of the human race: so that his voluntary act, in opposition to the will of his Creator, may be reckoned that of his descendants; not indeed strictly and properly (for those not yet born could not perform an act), but interpretatively or by imputation; for this act was not only imputed to Adam to condemnation, but to all his posterity.

That the above is a correct statement of the commonly received doctrine of the church, at the period of which we treat, will appear from many explicit declarations, not only of Augustine and other individuals, but from the decrees and letters of councils, consisting of numerous bishops, living in every region of the earth to which the universal church extended.

Augustine, in book xvi. of his work *De Civitate Dei*, has these words, "Nascuntur, non proprie, sed originaliter, peccatores." "Men are born, not properly, but originally, sinners." And in book i., c. 15 of his *Retractions*, he says, "Peccatum eos ex Adam dicimus originaliter trahere; id est, reatu eos implicatos, et ob hoc poenae obnoxios detineri." We affirm that they derive sin originally from Adam; that is, they are involved in guilt, and on this account are held liable to punishment.

In his work concerning the demerit and remission of sin, he says, that *to impute* and *to remit* are opposites; therefore he asserts, *to impute* is to subject one to guilt; *to remit* is, *not to impute* to condemnation. Here it may be proper to remark, that by *imputation* Augustine meant, not a transfer of moral acts or moral character, but the opposite of remission; *to impute a sin*, therefore, according to him, is to hold the person bound to suffer its punishment. And by the word *reatus*, or *guilt*, he understood an obligation to suffer the punishment of sin, or a subjection to the penalty of the law. It is necessary to understand accurately the meaning of these terms as used by theologians, or we shall be involved in perpetual perplexity in relation to their opinions. Most of the objections now made to the doctrine of imputation and to the transfer of guilt, proceed from a misapprehension of the true import of these terms.

We, therefore, hear a great deal of declamation respecting the impossibility of making a transfer of moral character, and respecting the impossibility of ever removing the guilt of a sinner ; but if the exact meaning of these terms was apprehended, the supposed difficulty or absurdity would vanish. For, although personal acts cannot be transferred, the consequences or legal penalties of those acts may be transferred ; and although the ill-desert of one man cannot be transferred to another, the punishment due to one can be inflicted on another.

But to return, Augustine says again, book xiv., c. 11, *De Civitate Dei* : “ A duobus primis transmissum est tam grande peccatum, ut in deterius eo natura mutaretur humana, etiam in posteros obligatione peccati, et mortis necessitate transmissa.” Which may be thus rendered into English : “ From the first pair so great a sin has been transmitted, that by it human nature is changed for the worse ; also the bond of iniquity and the necessity of death are transmitted to their posterity.”

And this manner of speaking of original sin was not peculiar to Augustine ; for we find the same sort of language in Bernard. When speaking of the first sin, he has the following words : “ Aliena est quia in Adam omnes nescientes peccavimus ; nostra, quia, etsi in alio, nos tamen peccavimus, et nobis justo Dei judicio imputatur.” The meaning of which is, “ That this first sin, of which he is here treating, was *another's*, inasmuch as in Adam we sinned ; being unconscious of it, *our own*, inasmuch as, although by another, yet we ourselves have sinned, and in the just judgment of God it is imputed to us.”

Nicolas Lyra, who lived about four hundred years ago, speaks the same language when explaining the fifth of *Romans*. “ Peccatum Adæ imputatur omnibus ab eo descendentibus, secundum vim generativam, quod sic sunt membra ejus, propter quod vocatur peccatum originale.” A literal translation of which is, “ The sin of Adam is imputed to all descending from him by natural generation, because they are his members, on which account it is called original sin.”

And the later writers, until the council of Trent, do not deviate from this language of the ancient church. Cajetan, commenting on the same (*Romans* v.), says, “ The punishment of death is inflicted on him with his whole posterity ; by which it is proved that the sin of which death is the punishment is imputed to him and to his whole posterity.”

And even Bellarmine uses as strong language on the subject of imputation as any who went before him. “ Adam,” says he, “ alone committed that (sin) by actual volition, but it is communicated to us by generation, in that mode in which it was possible for that which is past to be communicated, viz. by imputation.”

It is scarcely necessary to adduce testimonies from early Protestant writers ; for it is known to all in the least acquainted with the opinions of the reformers, that with one consent they held that



the sin of Adam was imputed to his posterity; and that in consequence of this imputation a corrupt nature was communicated to all his natural descendants. We could fill volumes with citations in proof of this fact, but it is unnecessary. Indeed, until Socinus arose, no one connected with the reformation ever intimated a doubt concerning the imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity. This ingenious but heretical man utterly denied, as all his followers do, the whole doctrine of original sin. His words are, "Although all the posterity of Adam are liable to eternal death, this is not because the sin of Adam is imputed to them, but because they are his natural descendants; so that their doom to death does not arise from imputation, but from the propagation of the human race."

It is now, by many who would be esteemed orthodox, and Calvinistic too, considered so absurd to hold the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, that they will not even condescend to argue the point and demonstrate its falsehood. If these be correct in their views of the subject, it must create some surprise that all theologians, from the days of Augustine, who were not acknowledged heretics, believed firmly in this doctrine, and considered it as fundamental in the Christian system. Is it certainly the fact that these modern impugnors of the ancient doctrine of the church understand the scriptures better than all who have gone before them? Or is it undoubted that they are endowed with a perspicacity so much superior to that of Augustine, Calvin, Owen and Edwards, that what these thought after profound consideration might be defended as reasonable, is so absurd as not to merit a refutation? Now we confess ourselves to be of the number of those who believe, whatever reproach it may bring upon us from a certain quarter, that if the doctrine of imputation be given up the whole doctrine of original sin must be abandoned. And if this doctrine be relinquished, then the whole doctrine of redemption must fall, and what may then be left of Christianity they may contend for that will; but for ourselves, we shall be of opinion that what remains will not be worth a serious struggle.

But we must return to our proper subject. It will next be satisfactory to know by what sort of arguments the ancient theologians defended the doctrine of original sin. And although we will not vouch for the soundness of every interpretation of scripture which the ancient expositors gave, yet it cannot but be satisfactory to the advocates of this doctrine now, that as far back as we can trace the history of opinions, the same views were entertained of the meaning of the principal texts which bear on this point as are now maintained.

The fathers, then, supported the doctrine of original sin by such texts as *Gen. vi. 5.—xiii. 21.* "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Ambrose, in his re-

marks on this text, does not confine it to the antediluvians, but considers it a description of human nature in every age, and extends it to persons in every period of human life : for he says, " Even the child of a day old is not without sin, for infancy cannot be exempt from sin on account of the infirmity of the body."

Another text which they adduced in proof of original sin was *Gen. xvii. 14.* " And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people : he hath broken my covenant." On this text Augustine remarks, " That the soul which is not regenerated shall perish, since he, with all others, sinned in Adam." It seems that they interpreted the breach of the covenant to have reference to the covenant made with Adam, and not the covenant of circumcision. For thus we find Bede commenting on this text, " Not the covenant of circumcision, which an infant that could neither will good nor evil could not break, though his parents might ; but that covenant is signified which God entered into with the first man, and which every one who has only lived a day upon earth has violated, and so stands in need of a saving remedy."

*Job xiv. 4.* " Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? not one," is another text on which the ancient theologians relied for the proof of original sin. As they followed the Seventy, however, they found more to their purpose in this text than is contained in the Hebrew. For in the Greek version the text reads thus, *Τίς γὰρ καθαρὸς ἔσται ἀπο βύβου ; ἀλλ' οἷθεις, ἐὰν καὶ μία ἡμέρα ὁ βίος αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.* Which literally translated is, " For who is clean from filth ? not one, if even his life has been but of one day on the earth." Hence, we find Augustine, in reference to this text, saying, " The stain of the vitiated root is diffused through the branches, being transmitted by natural generation ; so that there is not an infant of one day old free from the guilt of sin, unless saved by unmerited grace. For he who has no sin properly of his own, has derived to him the sin of another, concerning which the apostle speaks where he says, by one man sin entered into the world, &c."

The next argument the fathers derived from *Psaln li. 5.* " Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." It was left for modern critics to discover that David was here bewailing the sinfulness of his mother ; such an idea never seems to have entered the mind of any of the ancient commentators. They argue thus from the text. If David, that most holy king, and born of pious parents, contracted pollution in his conception, then certainly the same must be true of all other men. Thus reasoned Origen, Basil the Great, Theodoret, Rufin, Cassiodorus, Euthymius and Remigius, in their scholia on this text. Likewise Hilary, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Faustus, Isychius, Gregory the Great, Alcuin, Bede, and every other orthodox commentator for seventeen centuries after Christ. They who still believe that the Psalmist is here speaking of the sin of his birth, notwithstanding the learned criticisms which have recently appeared on this text,

have the comfort of knowing that they are supported by the opinions of all the ancients and all the moderns whose opinions carry weight in matters of this kind.

Another text adduced by the ancient advocates of this doctrine is *Is. xliii. 3*. "And wast called a transgressor from the womb." On which Cyril, on Hosea, makes several remarks, tending to show the original depravity of man.

But let us now come to the New Testament ; and here the first text which the fathers urge in proof of original sin is *John iii. 3, 6*. "Verily, verily I say unto you, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." From which it was argued, that whatever was carnally propagated could only savour of carnal things, which in order to become spiritual must be born of the spirit ; without spiritual regeneration it was impossible to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Augustine often makes use of this text in his controversy with the Pelagians ; and it is used in the same manner by Prosper, and by Gregory the Great.

But the passage of scripture on which they depended above all for the support of the doctrine of original sin, was the fifth of Romans, from the twelfth verse to the end of the chapter. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed on all men, because that (or in whom) all have sinned."

Ver. 14. "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."

Ver. 18. "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

Ver. 19. "For as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners."

From these passages they reasoned in the following manner : That sin which the apostle so describes as that which has brought death on all men ;—that by it all men have sinned ;—and by it have been constituted sinners, even those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression (that is, have not committed actual sin) ;—and in consequence of this sin all are become subject to death and condemnation ; therefore, this sin, although committed by Adam alone, as it was a personal act, yet may be considered as the sin of human nature, since he stood as the representative of us all, who were then included in his loins ; and are all therefore laid under an obligation to suffer the punishment of his sin.

The fathers also were particular in noticing that Adam was here called the type of Christ, whence they inferred, that as we are justified by the imputation and not the imitation of Christ's obedience, so the disobedience of Adam becomes ours, not by imitation but by imputation. They, moreover, remarked, that the particles *ἐν ᾧ* (in whom) teach us that the posterity of Adam sinned in him : or if you prefer rendering these words, *because that*, or *inasmuch as*, all have sinned, they must contain a sufficient reason for the death of all, infants as well as others ; and therefore the word *all* must



be considered as including infants; when it is said, therefore, all have sinned, it will follow that infants also have sinned. This method of reasoning is pursued by Augustine in many different parts of his works; and the same method of reasoning from this passage is followed by Theodoret, by Prosper, by Faustus, by Gennadius, and also by the Carthaginian and Arausicanian councils.

Another passage of scripture which the ancient theologians considered conclusive, on the subject of original sin, was Rom. vii., where Paul speaks of "a law in his members warring against the law of his mind. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good I find not." The necessity of the aids of divine grace is argued from this passage by Irenaeus, Tertullian and Augustine, in more places than one. This father, indeed, gives us two distinct expositions of the apostle's meaning in the afore-cited words. According to the first of these, the conflict here described is between conscience and sinful desires drawing the soul to evil; but according to the latter, the struggle is between the sinful nature which remains in the regenerate, and the new man or principle of grace, implanted by the Holy Spirit. But in either sense it furnishes strong proof of the natural proclivity of man to evil: but especially in the latter sense, in which a remaining leaven of iniquity is found in the regenerate, continually hindering his holy exercises, it furnishes an undoubted proof of the depravity of our nature.

They also appealed to 1 Cor. xv. 22, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." On this text the writer of certain ancient commentaries, which have been ascribed to Ambrose, says, "Paul says this because as Adam by sinning found death, so he subjected all his posterity to the same punishment: so also Christ by not sinning, overcame death and acquired life for all those who are of his body; that is, the resurrection." And again, "As all die in Adam, whether they be just or unjust, so also all, whether believers or unbelievers, shall be raised from the dead by Christ; but they who believe not, to punishment."

Augustine expresses his views of the import of this passage thus: "The opinion of the apostle is here clearly exhibited, that none are subject to death but through Adam, and that none enter into eternal life unless by Christ. For by the word *all* repeated in this verse, we are to understand in the first instance, all who are naturally descended from Adam, and in the second, all who are united to Christ by a spiritual regeneration: so then it is declared that none die except by their connection with Adam, and none are made alive but those who are quickened in Christ." The argument is simply this, as all are vivified in Christ, in like manner all die in Adam; but Christ vivifies those for whom he has merited the forgiveness of sin, and on whom he bestows a new life by regeneration: therefore Adam, in like manner, by his sin, has merited death for all his

posterity, and transmitted to them a corrupt nature by ordinary generation.

The last text of scripture which we will mention, as furnishing satisfactory proof to the fathers of the doctrine of original sin, is Ephes. ii. 3. "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." On this many ancient writers comment, and all agree in the opinion that it means that when born we are under condemnation, from which Christ came to deliver us.

Four of the texts above cited, as teaching the doctrine of original sin, Jerome applies to the same purpose in a single paragraph of his commentary on Ezekiel. Of his remarks, however, we shall only cite that which relates to the famous text in the fifty-first Psalm. "David says, I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother bring me forth: not in the iniquity of his mother, or his own personal sin, but in the sin of human nature. Whence, the apostle says, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."

From this remark we learn, not only what Jerome thought was the meaning of being conceived in sin, but also that he understood the apostle to mean infants, where he speaks of those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. And we believe that in regard to both these texts he speaks the language of all antiquity.

Among the reasons by which the doctrine of original sin, as held by the ancients, was supported, the sufferings and death of infants were believed to hold the first place, because it was considered that it would be altogether unjust that they should be thus punished, unless they were charged with the guilt of some sin. Hence, Augustine, in his fourth book against the two letters of Pelagius, says, "But how is it that the Pelagians hold that death only is derived to us from Adam? According to them, we die because he died; but he died because he had sinned. They hold, therefore, that punishment passes upon us without any fault: innocent infants then are punished by an unjust sentence; suffering death without having merited this punishment." And again, in his sixth book against Julian, he says, "The sins of parents, in one respect, are not ours, but in another respect they are ours. They are not ours as it relates to the personal act, but they are ours by the contagion of our descent; which, if it were not true, a grievous yoke would be upon the children of Adam from the day of their birth, which could by no means be reconciled with justice." And in his last answer to Julian he says, "This judgment (viz. death) on infants would be altogether unjust if there were no original sin." And again, "Why are little children so grievously afflicted if they have no sin at all. Could not an omnipotent and just God prevent these unjust punishments from falling on infants?"

The writer of the book entitled *Hypognosticon* argues in a similar manner. "If the sin of our first parents hurt no one but them-

selves, how does it happen that the punishment of their fault falls upon us? unless you maintain that God is unjust, who suffers those who are free from all sin to be held bound under the chain of punishment."

Prosper reasons in the same manner. In his book against Col-lator he says, "Unless you choose to affirm what is evidently false, that punishment, not sin, has been transmitted to the posterity of Adam; for it is too impious to think this of the justice of God, that it is his will to condemn those who are free from sin to the same punishment as the guilty. But wherever punishment is manifest, there is complete evidence of the existence of sin; for sin and punishment are indissolubly united; therefore human misery is not from the constitution of the Creator, but from the retribution of the Judge."

It must be confessed, however, that some among the orthodox of that age held that God, as a sovereign, might punish his creatures, and even doom them to eternal death, although they had never sinned. Of this opinion was Macarius the Egyptian. The opinion of Augustine and Prosper, however, has commonly been entertained by sound theologians in all ages. Some indeed think that the two opinions may be reconciled, by supposing that the one party speak of the punishment of loss merely, while the others speak of the punishment of sense. But this is not very satisfactory; and the opinion of Macarius, which has been received by some since the reformation, is dishonourable to God. And so it was esteemed by the council of Arausicanum; for in their second canon they declare, "That to say that God inflicts death, which is the punishment of sin, where no sin exists, is to charge him with injustice." The same opinion is given by Anselm, who says, "It is repugnant both to wisdom and justice, that they whom God hath fitted for eternal happiness should, without being chargeable with sin, be forced to suffer punishment."

The fathers also relied on this argument, "That if infants were not involved in the guilt of sin, Christ cannot be their Saviour." On this subject Augustine says, in his first book against the two letters of Pelagius, "They contend that infants are in a safe state already, so that they dare deny that they owe their salvation to the Saviour." And again, in book second, "The Pelagians assert that God is not the Purifier, Saviour, and Deliverer of men of all ages." And in his answer to Julian, ch. xxxi., "The multitude whom you despise, that acknowledge the catholic faith, confess that infants are redeemed by the Saviour; and therefore they detest the error of the Pelagians who deny this." The same sentiments are found in many other passages of the writings of this father.

But scarcely any argument was more frequently resorted to by the advocates of the doctrine of original sin, than that derived from the baptism of infants. This argument is handled by Augustine in the following manner: "The church borrows for them (infants) the feet of others that they may come, the heart of others that they



may believe, the tongue of others that they may confess. For being sick, they are oppressed with the sin of another ; so, when made whole, they are saved through the confession of another for them. This practice the church always had ; always held. Let no one, therefore, whisper in your ears a contrary doctrine. The church received it from the faith of our ancestors, and perseveringly holds it fast, even to the end. For where there are none sick, there is no need of a physician. What need, therefore, can infants have of Christ if they are not sick ? If they are well, why seek a physician to take care of them ? If they are infected with no sin when they are brought to Christ, why is it not said to those who bring them into the church, ‘ Carry these innocents hence ; they that be whole need not a physician, but the sick.’ ‘ Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners.’ ”

So also the council of Milevum, or rather of Carthage, denounced such as denied that infants should be baptized for the remission of original sin. Can. 17. “ For in no other sense can that be understood which was spoken by the apostle—that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death hath passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned—than in that adopted by the universal church everywhere diffused. For by reason of this rule of faith, even infants, who were never capable of committing any sin themselves, are nevertheless baptized according to truth for the remission of sins : so that the pollution contracted by them in their birth might be cleansed by their regeneration.”

But that which was thought to give peculiar force to this argument was, that Cœlestius himself, in a book which he edited at Rome, was constrained to confess, “ That infants are baptized for the remission of sins, according to the rule of the universal church, and according to the doctrine of the Gospel.” It seems, then, that from this argument the Pelagians were never able to extricate themselves ; but of this more hereafter.

The view which has been given of the opinions of the universal church, on the subject of original sin, relate only to the age of the Pelagian controversy. It may still be a matter of proper and important inquiry, what opinions were commonly entertained on this point before the commencement of the fifth century ? From the almost universal concurrence of theologians in Africa, Asia, and Europe, in the belief of this doctrine, we may infer that it did not originate in this age. We may be sure, from this consideration, that the doctrine of original sin was not invented by Augustine, as some have pretended. Jerome was more learned, and at this time much more known than Augustine, and he held the same doctrine, and commenced writing against the heresy of Pelagius before Augustine took up his pen ; and these distinguished fathers lived in parts of the church widely separated from each other ; the one in Africa, the other in Palestine. But in every council, except the little one of Diospolis, the doctrine of Pelagius

was condemned, and the doctrine of original sin affirmed; and commonly without a dissenting voice. At some of these councils there were present several hundreds of theologians. Even in the council of Diospolis, which acquitted Pelagius, there was nothing determined inconsistent with the catholic doctrines; but the case was, that Pelagius, by artfully concealing his true opinions under plausible but ambiguous terms, deceived the fathers who sat in that council, as Augustine has shown. If it be a fact then that at the commencement of the fifth century all the theologians in the world, except a few who were soon rejected as heretics, agreed in maintaining the doctrine of original sin, how shall we account for the universal prevalence of such a doctrine, but by supposing that it was handed down from the first planting of the Christian church? For if it had been an error introduced by some particular doctor, or by some section of the church, it would not have been universal in its diffusion, nor would it have united the suffrages of all the faithful ministers of the Gospel, as we see it did. And again, supposing that by extraordinary efforts this doctrine, so repugnant to the natural feelings of men, could have been everywhere propagated by the commencement of the fifth century, would there be no trace of such an universal change of opinion, and no record of the extraordinary efforts necessary to bring it about? Among all the writers who have touched on this subject, is it not strange that not one is found who gives the least hint of any such thing? Surely a change in relation to a doctrine so radical must have occasioned controversy. All would not have adopted a new and distasteful doctrine upon its first proposal. These are things which can never be cleared up on the hypothesis that the doctrine of original sin was not the doctrine of the apostolic churches.

Here we might gather up, from the writings of almost all the fathers who preceded Augustine, testimonies incidentally given, which would serve to show that they all believed in the same doctrine of original sin, which was so strenuously defended by the whole Christian church in the beginning of the fifth century: and it would be easy to pursue this course, because Augustine has travelled over the same ground before us, and has adduced testimonies on this subject from Ignatius, from the work under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, from Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and others, who, although they do not enter into any discussion on this subject (for it was not a matter of dispute), yet drop such expressions incidentally, when treating other subjects, as are sufficient to prove that there was from the beginning one uniform faith on this fundamental point. The reader who is desirous of further information on this subject is referred to the various treatises of Augustine on original sin. But our limits and our plan require that we should now exhibit a brief but impartial view of the real opinions of Pelagius and his followers, which shall, as far as possible, be given in their own words; which testimonies, however, are taken from the

writings of Augustine and others, their own works having for the most part perished.

Pelagius, in his book *De Natura*, as quoted by Augustine, says,\* “When it is declared that all have sinned in Adam, it should not be understood of any original sin contracted by their birth, but of imitation.” Again,† “How can a man be considered guilty by God of that sin which he knows not to be his own? for if it is necessary, it is not his own; but if it is his own, it is voluntary; and if voluntary, it can be avoided.” In his exposition of the epistle to the Romans he says,‡ “The opposers of the propagation of sin thus endeavour to impugn the doctrine. The sin of Adam has not injured those not sinning, just as the righteousness of Christ does not profit those not believing: for it is said, that in like manner, yea much more, is salvation by one, than perdition by one. And if baptism cleanses that ancient sin, then they who are born of two baptized persons must be free from that sin; for they could not transmit that to posterity which they no longer possessed themselves. Moreover, they say that if the soul is not by traduction, but the flesh only, then the flesh only is concerned in the propagation of sin, and it alone deserves to be punished; for they allege that it would be altogether unjust that a soul just born should be obliged to bear that ancient sin of Adam, from whom it has not derived its origin. For they allege that it can by no means be conceded that God, who pardons our own sins, should impute to us the sin of another person.” Pelagius does not speak here in his own name, but as personating others, whose opinions and arguments he exhibits; for at this time he durst not openly declare his real sentiments. In like manner Cœlestius disseminated the same doctrine, as will be shown below, and also pursued the same insidious policy in propagating his opinions.

Julian, also, in his last work against Augustine, charges this father with holding, “that infants were oppressed with the guilt of no sin of their own, but only with that of another person.” Again he says, “whoever is accused of a crime, the charge is made against his conduct, and not against his birth.” And in the conclusion, where he recapitulates what he had written, he says, “Therefore we conclude that the triune God should be adored as

\* “In Adamo peccasse omnes, non propter peccatum nascendi origine attractum, sed propter imitationem dictum est.”

† “Quomodo Deo pro illius peccati reatu subditus esse poterit, quod suum non esse cognoverit? Suum enim non est, si necessarium est. Aut suum si est, voluntarium est. Et si voluntarium est, vitari potest.”

‡ “Hi qui contra traducem peccati sunt, ita illum impugnare nituntur. Si Adæ, inquit, peccatum etiam non peccantibus nocuit, ergo et Christi justitia etiam non credentibus prodest: quia similiter, imo et magis dicit, per unum salvari, quam per unum ante perierunt. Si baptismus mundat antiquum illud delictum, qui de duobus baptizatis nati fuerint, debent hoc carere peccato: non enim potuerunt ad posteros transmittere, quod ipsi minime habuerunt. Illud quoque accedit, quia si anima non est ex traduce, sed sola caro, ipsa tantum habet traducem peccati, et ipsa sola poenam meretur; injustum esse dicentes, ut hodie nata anima non ex massa Adæ, tam antiquum peccatum portet alienum. Dicunt etiam, nulla ratione concedi ut Deus qui propria peccata remittit, imputet aliena.”



most just ; and it has been made to appear most irrefragably, that the sin of another never can be imputed by him to little children.”\* And a little afterwards, “Hence that is evident, which we defend as most reasonable, that no one is born in sin, and that God never judges men to be guilty on account of their birth.”† Again, “Children, inasmuch as they are children, never can be guilty, until they have done something by their own proper will.” And as the ground on which the doctrine of communicated guilt was held was a certain natural conjunction of the parties, by reason of which Paul declares that we sinned in Adam, therefore they used their utmost exertion to elude the force of this argument. Julian reasons thus, “If there was no such thing as one man imitating another, and the apostle had declared that all had sinned in Adam, yet this mode of speaking might be defended by scripture use : for Christ called the devil a father, although he is incapable of generation ; so the apostle, in describing how the first man was imitated by those who came after him, might without impropriety use such language as that before cited.” And again, “The apostle Paul gave no occasion to error, and said nothing improper, when he declared that the first man was a sinner, and that his example was imitated by those who followed him.” “By one man sin entered into the world ; but one man was sufficient to furnish an example which all might imitate.” “He speaks of one, that he might teach that the communication of sin was by imitation, not by generation.” “Which sin, although it did not become a part of our nature, was, however, the pattern of all sin ; and hence, although it is not chargeable on men in consequence of their birth, it is by reason of their imitation of it.” Prosper, in his epistle to Demetrius, expresses the opinion thus, “The sin of Adam hurts his posterity by its example, but not by natural communication.”

These opinions were rejected and firmly opposed by the orthodox. Jerome, at the close of his third book against the Pelagians, writes thus, “If it be objected that it is said there are some who have not sinned, it is to be understood that they did not actually commit the sin of which Adam was guilty by transgressing the commandment of God in Paradise, but all men are held to be guilty, either in consequence of the sin of Adam, their ancient progenitor, or by their own personal act. The infant, by the engagement of his parent in baptism, is released : and he who has arrived at years of understanding is delivered, both by another’s engagement and his own, namely, by the blood of Christ. And let it not be supposed that I understand this in a heretical sense, for the blessed martyr Cyprian, in the letter which he wrote to Ttidus the bishop concerning the baptism of infants, says, ‘how much more ought infants not to be debarred from baptism, who being recently born

\* “*Conclusum est, nos Deum acquissimum in trinitate venerari ; et irrefutabiliter apparuit, non posse ab eo peccatum alienum parvulis imputari.*”

† “*Ex quibus necessario conficitur, nos rectissime defendere, neminem cum peccato nasci, et Deum reos non posse judicare nascentes.*”

have committed no sin, unless that by their carnal birth from Adam they have contracted the contagion of that ancient death in their first nativity. They ought, therefore, more readily to be admitted to receive the remission of sins, since that which is forgiven them is not their own sin, but that of another." Augustine also strenuously opposed this opinion of the Pelagians in all his writings, "For," says he, "we were all in that one man, when he, being one, corrupted us all." *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xiii., c. 14. And in lib. i., c. 10 of his *Retractations*, he says, "The opinion which I delivered, that sin injures no nature but that in which it is committed, the Pelagians apply to the support of their own doctrine, that little children cannot be hurt by the sin of another, but only by their own; not considering that, as they belong to human nature, which has contracted original sin, for human nature sinned in our first parents, it is true, therefore, that no sins hurt human nature but its own." Orosius, in his *Apology for Free Will*, says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, either in Adam or in their own proper persons: the universal mass, therefore, is obnoxious to punishment. And if the punishment of condemnation due to all should be inflicted, certainly it is not unjustly inflicted." In like manner, the writer of the book entitled *Hypognosticon* says, "Truly then the sin of Adam hurt him alone while he was alone, and Eve his wife: but in them we were all included, because they were the nature of the whole human race, which is one in all of us, for we partake of their nature."

What has been brought forward relates to the imputation of the first sin; let us next inquire what was the Pelagian doctrine respecting the communication of its stain or pollution. Pelagius, in his book *De Natura*, says, "First it is disputed concerning this, whether our nature is debilitated and deteriorated by sin. And here, in my opinion, the first inquiry ought to be, what is sin? Is it a substance, or is it a mere name, devoid of substance; not a thing, not an existence, not a body, nor anything else (which has a separate existence) but an act: and if this is its nature, as I believe it is, how could that which is devoid of substance debilitate or change human nature?" And in his book *Concerning Free Will*, "Everything, good or evil, praiseworthy or censurable, which we possess, did not originate with us, but is done by us; for we are born capable both of good and evil, but not in possession of these qualities; for in our birth we are equally destitute of virtue and vice; and previously to moral agency, there is nothing in man but that which God created in him."

Cœlestius held precisely the same doctrine. Augustine testifies that he held and taught "That the sin of Adam hurt himself alone, and that infants are born in that state in which Adam was before he sinned." Julian maintained the same doctrine, which he repeatedly expresses and pertinaciously defends; "Human nature," says he, "in the time of our being born, is rich in the gift of innocence." Again, "Even if the devil should create men, they would be free

from all evil in their origin ; and so now they cannot be born in sin because no one can help being born, nor can it be just to demand from any one, what is to him altogether impossible." The same says, "There is no sin in the condition of our nature." And, "Nobody is born with sin ; but our free will is so entirely unimpaired, that before the exercise of our own proper will, nature in every one is free from every taint." Hence Prosper, in his *Chronicon* for the year 414, has this remark, "About this time Pelagius, the Briton, published his doctrine, that the sin of Adam injured himself alone, and did not affect his posterity ; and that all infants are born as free from sin as Adam was before his transgression." It cannot be a matter of surprise that the Pelagians held that Adam's posterity inherited from him a corrupt nature, when they did not believe that his own nature was deteriorated by sinning. Julian, therefore, says, "A man's natural state is not changed by sinning, but he becomes guilty and the subject of demerit ; for it is of the very essence of free will that the man should have it in his power as much to cease from sinning, as to deviate from the path of rectitude."

In opposition to these opinions, the doctors of the catholic church held, that all the posterity of Adam were now destitute of original righteousness, with which he was endowed, and hence proceeds an inordinate exercise of all the powers of the mind, which is called the fuel of sin, the law in the members, concupiscence, &c.

Augustine is full and explicit on this subject. Lib. xxi., c. 3, *De Civitate Dei*, he says, "On account of the greatness of the crime, the nature of man was changed in its punishment ; so that what was inflicted as a punishment on our sinning first parents, comes naturally on others born of them." Again, lib. xiv., c. 12, "Human nature was changed by the sin of the first pair ; so that a silent corruption pervades it, such as we see and feel, and by reason of which we are subjected to death, and to so many and great evils, and are disturbed and agitated with so many contrary and conflicting passions, such as had no existence in Paradise before man sinned, although he was there invested with an animal body." Also, "How else shall we account for that horrible depth of ignorance, from which all error originates, by which all the sons of Adam are involved in a certain dark gulf, from which they cannot be delivered without labour, sorrow and fear ?" Speaking again of the many kinds of vices to which men are subject, he adds, "All these sins of wicked men proceed from the same root of error and perverse love with which every child of Adam is born."

Prosper also expresses himself strongly on this subject. "By the wound of original sin the nature of all men is corrupted and mortified in Adam, whence the disease of all manner of concupiscence hath sprung up." The same writer says, in another place, "Whence is it, that if what Adam lost his posterity did not lose, he himself is not alone the sufferer by his sin, and not his posterity ? but the truth is, all have sinned in one, and every branch from this



corrupt root is justly condemned. What Adam lost, then, by the fall, all have likewise lost."

The writer concerning the Vocation of the Gentiles, lib. i., c. 6, has these words: "Human nature was vitiated by the transgression of the first man; so that even in the reception of blessings, and in the midst of helps and divine precepts, there is a continual proclivity of the will to evil; in which, as often as we confide, we are deceived." Again, "All men were created in the first man without fault, and we all have lost the integrity of our nature by his transgression." "Adam was by nature free from sin, but by the disobedience of his will he contracted many evils, and transmitted them to be multiplied more and more by his posterity."

Vincentius Lyra asks, "Who, before Cœlestius, that monstrous disciple of Pelagius, ever denied that the whole human race was held guilty of Adam's sin?"

Peter, the deacon, in his book concerning the Incarnation, says, "Therefore, seduced by the cunning of the serpent, of his own accord he became a transgressor of the divine law; and so, agreeably to the threatening, he was in the just judgment of God condemned to the punishment of death; that is, both body and mind were changed for the worse, and having lost liberty, he was enslaved under the servitude of sin; hence it is that no man is born who is not bound by the bond of this sin, with the exception of Him who was born by a new mode of generation, that he might lose the bond of sin; even the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

It was also a doctrine of the Pelagians, that temporal death was by the necessity of nature, and did not fall on the human race in consequence of the sin of our first parents. They alleged that Adam would have died, although he had never sinned. Very far, then, were they from acknowledging that we had incurred eternal death by the sin of Adam. Augustine relates, that it was one of the charges against Pelagius, in Palestine, that he held the doctrine of Cœlestius, "that neither by the death nor transgression of Adam do the whole human race die, nor do the whole human race rise from the dead in virtue of Christ's resurrection." "Death," said he, "passed to the posterity of Adam by imitation of his sin, not by generation." Augustine, in his last answer to Julian, addresses him thus, "You will not agree that by reason of original sin death passes on the human race, for then you would be forced to acknowledge that sin had been propagated through all our race. For you cannot but perceive how unjust it would be to inflict punishment where there is no guilt."

Orosius, against Pelagius, has these words, "Your followers, who have sucked the poison abundantly from your breast, assert, that man was made mortal, and that he incurred no loss from the transgression of the precept." And the writer of the *Hypognosticon* says, speaking of the Pelagians, "They tell us, that whether Adam had sinned or not, he would have died,"

On the other hand, the orthodox maintained, "That death, temporal and eternal, together with all pains and diseases connected with the death of the body, flow from the first sin; and that unless Adam had sinned, he never would have died."

Augustine fully expresses the opinion of the church catholic in his book *De Peccat. Mer. et Remiss.* "Although, as to his body, he was of the earth, and partook of an animal nature, yet if he had not sinned, his body would have been changed into a spiritual body, and into that incorruptibility which is promised to the saints at the resurrection." Again, "If Adam had not sinned, he never would have been divested of his body, but would have been clothed with immortality and incorruption; so that mortality would have been swallowed up of life; that is, there would have been a transition from animal to spiritual life." "According to my judgment, he had a resource in the fruits of the trees of the garden against the decays of nature, and in the tree of life against old age." "So great a sin was committed by the first two of our race, that human nature underwent a change for the worse: also the obligation of their sin and the necessity of dying have been transmitted to posterity. And the reign of death over men will prevail until due punishment shall precipitate into the second death which has no end, all except those whom the unmerited grace of God shall bring into a state of salvation."

From this last question arose another. Why are infants baptized; and if they should depart without baptism, in what state do they deserve to be placed? Pelagius, lest he should be obliged to confess that they were under the bond of original sin, and by their birth exposed to eternal death, denied that they received baptism for the remission of the guilt of the first sin, or that they might be translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God. Thus Augustine declares, "That the Pelagians will not believe that original sin is removed by baptism, for they contend that no such thing exists in those just born." Hence many inferred that they did not believe that infants were redeemed by Christ: and some affirmed that they denied the propriety of the baptism of infants altogether. But Pelagius, in the book which he addressed to Innocent, bishop of Rome, clears himself from imputations of this kind. "Who was ever so impious," says he, "as to wish to interdict infants from a share in the common redemption of the human race?" And the council of Carthage acknowledges that Cœlestius admitted the redemption of infants. Augustine also, in his 89th epistle, addressed to Hilary, among other things says, "He was forced to confess, on account of the baptism of infants, that redemption was necessary for them also. Where, although he was unwilling to speak explicitly concerning original sin, yet by the very naming of redemption he involved himself in difficulty; for from what should they be redeemed but from the power of the devil, under which they could not be unless they were under the guilt of original sin? Or with what price are they redeemed, unless with the blood of

Christ, concerning which it is most manifestly declared, that it was shed for the remission of sins ?” But Pelagius put another meaning on the word redemption, concerning which Augustine speaks in another place. Hilary expresses their opinion thus : “That an infant dying unbaptized, cannot justly perish, since it is born without sin.” And Augustine describes it in these words, “Nor do little children need the grace of the Saviour, by which, through baptism, they may be delivered from perdition, because they have contracted no guilt from their connection with Adam.” The Pelagians, however inconsistent it may appear, not only retained the baptism of infants, but also the very form which had been long in use, according to which it was said to be for the remission of sins. On which subject Augustine remarks, “Of what advantage is it that you make use of the same words in the baptism of infants as adults, when you take away the thing signified in this sacrament ?” And the author of the *Hypognosticon* addresses them with severity respecting the same thing ; “Who is not shocked at the mere naming of your practice, in which you make the faithful word of God in part true and in part a lie ; that is, true as it relates to adults, for you admit that they are indeed baptized for the remission of sins : but false as it relates to infants, who are not, according to you, baptized for the remission of sins, although you use in their baptism, this very form of words.” To these things the Pelagians had nothing to reply, except that although infants were free from sin, they were the subjects of the same sacrament, which, when applied to adults, was for the remission of sins. But when urged to state why they were at all baptized, they offered two reasons ; the one was, that by baptism they were adopted into the number of sons ; the other, that by it they received the promise of the kingdom of heaven. This made it necessary for Pelagius to feign some intermediate place between heaven and hell, to which unbaptized infants might be sent after death. But he was cautious about what he said on this point. We learn from Augustine that he was wont to say, “Whither infants do not go I know, but whither they do go, I know not.” This same father, therefore, in writing against Julian, adverts to this opinion in the following words : “You make two places of everlasting happiness ; the one within, and the other without the kingdom of God.” From what has been said, it is evident what were the opinions of the Pelagians respecting the future state of infants, and the reasons of their baptism. The opinions of the orthodox on these points were far different, for although they disputed among themselves what kind of punishment was due to infants, on account of original sin, whether of loss or of sense, yet there was an almost universal consent among them, that in consequence of original sin, we are children of wrath, and obnoxious to eternal punishment ; and, moreover, that baptism was for the remission of sins ; and that by baptism infants were regenerated, and thus made partakers of life and eternal felicity.

Augustine often brings up this subject, and may be considered as



speaking the sentiments of the whole church in his time. "I do not affirm," says he, "that infants dying without baptism will be in a worse condition than if they had never been born, for our Lord uses this expression respecting sinners of the most abandoned character: for from what he says about Sodom, and does not restrict to the wicked inhabitants of that city, that it will be more tolerable for them than some others in the day of judgment, the inference is clear that there will be a difference in the future punishment of men; who then can doubt but that unbaptized infants, who are chargeable with the guilt of original sin only, which has not been aggravated by any actual transgressions of their own, will fall under the lightest punishment of all? But what will be the nature or the degree of their punishment, although we cannot define, yet I should not dare say, that it would have been better for them never to have been born, than to exist in the state which will be allotted to them." Again, "It may be truly said, that unbaptized infants, leaving the body without baptism, will suffer the very mildest punishment; yet he who says that they will fall under no degree of condemnation, both deceives others and is deceived himself; for the apostle has said that the condemnation is of one sin; and that by one offence condemnation hath come upon all men." "We say that little children should be baptized; and of this no one doubts, for even they who differ from us in other points, all concur in this; we maintain, however, that this is that they may be saved, and may inherit eternal life, which they cannot possess unless they are baptized in Christ; but they say, it is not for salvation, not for eternal life, but for the kingdom of God."

Jerome also, in book iii. against the Pelagians, says, "This one thing I say, and will then conclude: either you should have another creed, which after the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, should contain a clause, that ye shall baptize infants for the kingdom of heaven; or if you use the same baptism for infants and adults, you should confess that the former as well as the latter are baptized for the remission of sins."

Paullinus, in his book addressed to Zosimus, after the condemnation of Pelagius and Cœlestius, says, "They strive against the apostolical doctrine of original sin, which hath passed on all men, for our race will possess that inheritance received from Adam, even unto the end of the world, and which is only by the sacrament of baptism removed from infants; who cannot inherit eternal life nor obtain the kingdom of God by any other means." A multitude of testimonies might be adduced of the same import, but it is unnecessary. The reader will perceive from those above cited, what is exceedingly evident to every one in the least conversant with ecclesiastical history, that the fathers of this period seem universally to have fallen into the mistake of confounding baptism with regeneration. From an erroneous interpretation of John iii. 5, they concluded that there was no salvation without external baptism; and the next step was that the internal grace of regeneration uniformly

accompanied the external rite ; and this notion had taken such full possession of their minds, that they commonly gave the name *regeneration* to baptism. We have not kept back the evidence of this fact, whatever may be its operation ; for we now have to act the part of faithful historians, and to exhibit fairly to the view of our readers the opinions of the ancient church on an important point of doctrine, which may be considered as lying at the foundation of the Christian system.

The cardinal point of the Pelagian system was the denial of original sin ; this was their *πρῶτον ψεῦδος*, their radical error, from which all the rest naturally germinated. The controversy did, however, include many other distinct points of no small interest, concerning which our limits do not permit us to say anything at present. Probably, in some future number we shall resume the subject, and exhibit a view of other controversies which have arisen in the church respecting original sin. It is attended with many advantages to bring into view ancient heresies ; for often what modern innovators consider a new discovery, and wish to pass off as a scheme suited to remove all difficulties, is found upon examination to be nothing else than some ancient heresy clothed in a new dress. That the doctrine of original sin is involved in many difficulties, which no mortal has the wisdom to explain, we are ready to admit : but the question with us is,—is it taught in the Bible ? And if any one choose to move a previous question, it will be,—can that book be divinely inspired which contains such a doctrine ? And here, if we could get clear of the thing by rejecting the scriptures, something would be gained ; but the evidence of original sin is deeply recorded in the acknowledged depravity of our race, and in the dispensations of God towards us. To account for the facts which experience teaches beyond all possibility of contradiction, we need the testimony which the Bible contains, which if we reject we may escape one set of difficulties, but shall assuredly plunge into others more formidable and unmanageable, although they may be more out of sight.

It is our opinion, therefore, after looking on all sides, and contemplating the bearing and consequences of all theories on this subject, that no one is on the whole so consistent with facts, with the scriptures ; and with itself, as the old doctrine of the ancient church, which traces all the sins and evils in the world to the *IMPUTATION* of the first sin of Adam ; and that no other theory of original sin is capable of standing the test of an impartial scrutiny.

## ESSAY V

# ORIGINAL SIN.

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ALTHOUGH, as has been shown in the former Essay, the Pelagian doctrines respecting original sin were condemned by councils and by popes, the heresy was not soon extinguished ; but was in whole or in part adopted by many learned and ingenious men. To many, the opinions of Augustine appeared harsh, and hardly reconcilable with moral agency and human accountableness. They, therefore, endeavoured to strike out a middle course between the rigid doctrines of Augustine and the unscriptural opinions of Pelagius. This led to the adoption of an intermediate system, which obtained the denomination of Semi-Pelagianism ; and as these views seem to have been generally received about Marseilles, in the south of France, the abettors of this theory were very commonly called Massilienses. Augustine entered also into this controversy, and carried on a correspondence on the subject with Prosper and Hilary, two learned men of that region ; the former of whom ardently opposed the Semi-Pelagians, while the latter was inclined to favour them. By degrees, however, the public attention was called off from this subject. The darkness and confusion produced by the incursion of the northern barbarians took away all opportunity and disposition to discuss those abstruse matters. Ages of ignorance succeeded, which have emphatically been called "the dark ages." Superstition advanced, indeed, with rapid strides, but doctrinal investigation was neglected ; or degenerated into mere logomachies, or useless thorny disputations.

We shall therefore pass over this long dark period with this slight notice, and will proceed to take a survey of the period antecedent to the Reformation ; and endeavour to ascertain the opinions of some of those acute and metaphysical men, denominated schoolmen. It has become customary for almost all classes of modern writers to treat the scholastic theology with sovereign contempt ; and this often without any adequate knowledge of the system which they condemn. It is true, these ingenious men often exhausted their energies and lost their labour by a vain attempt to fathom an abyss : but it would surprise some modern metaphysicians and theologians to learn how exactly they themselves are running in the track, and pursuing the very footsteps of these despised schoolmen.



Our first object, therefore, will be to lay before the reader a brief abstract of the discussions of the angelical doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, on the subject of original sin. The subject is treated in the eighty-second question of his second book.

On this subject he starts four queries. 1. "Whether original sin is a habit? 2. Whether original sin is one, in man? 3. Whether it consists in concupiscence? 4. Whether it exists in an equal degree in all?"

This author, in his vast work, entitled *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE*, invariably commences his discussion by briefly stating some arguments on each side of the question.

On the first question proposed above, he brings forward the following objections to the affirmative. 1. "Original sin consists in the privation of original righteousness, as is declared by Anselm; but a privation is not a habit, therefore original sin is not a habit." 2. "Actual sin is more deserving of blame than original sin, because it possesses more of a voluntary nature; but a mere habit of actual sin is not chargeable with guilt; for if it were, then a man would be guilty of sin all the time he was asleep. Original sin therefore is not a habit." 3. "Besides, in evil, the act always precedes the habit; for no evil habit is ever infused, but always acquired: but no act precedes original sin; therefore original sin is not a habit.

"But, on the other hand, Augustine declares that infants are the subjects of concupiscence; but they are not so in regard to the act; therefore original sin in them must be a habit."

The conclusion which he draws from a view of both sides of the question, is the following: "Original sin is a habit, but not in the same way as knowledge is a habit; but it is a certain inordinate condition of nature, and a debility consequent on the privation of original righteousness," which proposition he proceeds to explain as follows: "The word habit is taken in a two-fold sense; in the first, it signifies a power by which one is inclined to act; in this sense, knowledge and virtue are called habits: but in the other sense, habit is a disposition or state of nature composed of many particulars, according to which nature is in a condition favourable or unfavourable for any given exercise. Now, according to the first sense of the word, original sin is not a habit, but according to the second it is; just as we speak of health as a good habit or state of the body; and sickness as the contrary. Original sin, may, therefore, be described to be a certain inordinate condition or disposition proceeding from the loss of harmony in the exercise of the moral powers, in which harmony original righteousness consisted: just as sickness is a certain disordered state of the body and its functions, arising from the loss of that equal temperament in which health consists. On account of this analogy, original sin is often called 'a disease of the mind.' And as in bodily sickness, there is not a mere privation of that regular state and action in which health consists, but also an inordinate disposition, so also,

original sin includes both a privation of original righteousness, and a disorder of the faculties of the mind : it is not, therefore, merely a privation, but is also a corrupt habit."

"Again, as actual sin consists in the irregularity of our moral exercises, and original sin in the inordinate disposition of our nature, original sin may have the true nature and ill-desert of sin ; but such an inordinate condition of the soul has not the nature of an act, but of a habit ; therefore, original and actual sin are distinct, although both are connected with ill-desert."

But in regard to the third objection, stated above, in which it was alleged, that in evil, acts must precede the habit, as there can be no infusion of evil habits, "I would observe," says he, "that it has already been stated, that original sin does not consist in that kind of a habit in which there is a power inclining us to act ; for although from original sin there does follow an inclination to inordinate action, yet not directly, but indirectly : namely, by the removal of original righteousness, by which these inordinate motions were restrained, and everything preserved in its regular condition : just as in the case of bodily sickness there follows indirectly an inclination to irregular bodily motions. Original sin, therefore, ought not to be considered 'an infused habit,' nor a habit acquired by repeated acts, but an innate disposition derived from the voluntary transgression of the first man."

The above will serve as a specimen of the manner in which this subject was discussed in the thirteenth century. It is not to our purpose to take any notice of the author's answers to the other questions stated above.

It is now time to bring distinctly into view the opinions of the Reformers on the subject of original sin. And here it may be observed in the general, that while these distinguished and holy men appealed to the Bible for the proof of their doctrines, and would agree to submit to no other judge in matters of faith, yet they were all much in the habit of studying the writings of Augustine, whose views of doctrine appeared to them to be remarkably accordant with the sacred scriptures. From a knowledge of this fact, it might readily be inferred that the reformers agreed with the father before-mentioned in his views of original sin. There is no occasion, however, to have recourse to reasoning on this point : the confessions, catechisms, and treatises of these men, are as explicit as we could wish them to be ; and although they fell into deplorable divisions about other matters, yet in regard to doctrine, it is remarkable, they were all of one mind. This unanimity is not a conclusion merely inferred from their writings ; but at the famous conference between Luther and Zwingle, and their respective friends and adherents at Marpurg, where they were unable to come to any agreement respecting the eucharist, it was ascertained by a particular comparison of ideas on all the important doctrines of religion, that no difference of opinion existed among them on these points. And that this conference, from which the friends of peace

had expected so much, might not be altogether without fruit, a paper, or confession, consisting of fourteen articles, was prepared and signed by all the theologians present. The fourth of these articles related to original sin, and was in the following words: "Quarto.—Credimus, quod peccatum originale sit nobis innatum, et ab Adamo in nos propagatum. Et quod sit tale peccatum, quod omnes homines damnationi obnoxios faciat. Ita, quidem, ut nisi Jesum Christum nobis sua morte et vita subvenisset, omnes homines propter originale peccatum damnati fuissent, nec in regnum Dei, et ad æternam felicitatem pervenire potuissent."

These doctrinal articles were subscribed by Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, Osiander, Brentius, Agricola, Oecolampadius, Zwingle, Bucer and Hedio.

It is true, however, that Zwingle fell, for a while, under some suspicion of error, in regard to the doctrine of original sin; because he maintained that infants, the offspring of believing parents, would not finally perish for want of baptism: and it has been alleged, that in some of his writings he spake of original sin rather as our disease and curse than as our sin. On this account Rhegius addressed an admonitory letter to him, to which Zwingle replied explicitly and fully, so as to give full satisfaction to Rhegius and to others; and now, A.D. 1529, at Marburg, he and his followers were as ready to subscribe this doctrine as Luther himself. After the breach was found to be irreconcilable on the subject of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, the Lutherans indulged great bitterness of spirit towards this noble reformer, and often spoke of him and his adherents as *pelagianising*: although, in fact, they were as orthodox on this point as the Lutherans themselves.

As it appears that no diversity of opinion existed among the reformed on this subject, it will be sufficient, in addition to what has been said already, merely to exhibit the words of the famous confession of Augsburg, sometimes called the Augustan confession. "Peccatum originis habet privationem originalis justitiæ, et cum hoc inordinatam dispositionem partium animæ; unde non est privatio, sed quidam habitus corruptus." "Original sin consists in the want of original righteousness, and in an inordinate disposition of the faculties of the soul: so that it is not merely a privation, but a certain corrupt habit."

The perfect agreement of all the reformers on the subject of the imputation of the first sin of Adam to all his posterity, must be well known to all who are conversant with their writings. Their opinions on this subject have, however, been collected by the very learned Andrew Rivet, in his work on Original Sin, which is contained in the third volume of the folio edition of his works. It will be unnecessary, therefore, at present to exhibit their testimony on this point.

The far-famed council of Trent formed several canons on the subject of original sin, but they were expressed in the most ambiguous terms. Their object was, in general terms, to recognise the



ancient doctrine of the church on this point, but not to censure any of their own doctors, who differed exceedingly from one another in their views of the subject. That this was indeed the motive which actuated them, is explicitly declared by one of their most learned members, Andradius, who became also the principal defender of the canons and proceedings of that body. He informs us that the decrees of the council on this subject were not intended to condemn even the opinions which had been published by Albert Pighius, who confined original sin entirely to the imputation of the sin of Adam, and asserted that there was no such thing as inherent, hereditary depravity; for, he says, it was their purpose to leave all men at liberty to form what opinions they pleased respecting the nature of original sin.

Andradius himself, in treating this subject, makes a free use of this liberty, and discourses in the following manner: "Man, in his original creation, received a constitution, in which were implanted a number of appetites, desires, and affections, between which, considered in themselves, there was not a perfect concord, for the flesh naturally lusted against the mind, and *vice versâ*: but over these purely natural affections there was superinduced a moral character, called 'original righteousness,' by which all the irregular tendencies of the nature of man were restrained within proper bounds, and the exercise of the whole rendered harmonious." "The propension of these natural inclinations," he says, "is not in itself sinful, but when original righteousness is removed, then it becomes sinful by its disorder and extravagance. The very essence of original sin therefore consists in the absence of original righteousness, from which defect all sinful concupiscence proceeds. These natural inclinations, therefore, called 'concupiscence,' are not evil *per se*, but only by irregularity and excess; therefore, when the mind is renewed by the Holy Spirit, and they are again restrained within their proper limits, they cease to be sinful." But as all sin supposes the transgression of a law, Andradius asks, "whether the loss of original righteousness is repugnant to any law;" and answers, "that there is, indeed, no express law to which it is opposed," but says, "it is contrary to the general law of our nature, which requires everything essential to our moral perfection." But here our ingenious author falls into a difficulty, for he lays it down as a principle, "that all sin is the act of an intelligent and voluntary agent in violation of the law of God;" but the loss of original righteousness was owing to the personal fault of Adam, who was the only voluntary agent concerned in the transaction. His answer is subtle, though unsatisfactory; but it is borrowed from Augustine. "As all men were then included in Adam, so our wills were included in his will, and thus original sin may be said to be voluntary in us." But whereas there was but an obscure exercise of our will in the commission of the first sin, he maintains, and it is accordant with the common opinion of popish theologians, "that of all sins, original sin is the least;" but as this is directly contrary to

the declaration of the fathers, they say that the reason why it had been called *great* by them was on account of its wide diffusion and universal propagation.

It is very evident, therefore, from the explicit declarations of this great defender of the council of Trent, how much they obscured and misrepresented this fundamental doctrine of scripture : and, accordingly, he finds great fault with a writer of his own church who had taught that from the soul infected with original sin no good thing could naturally proceed ; asserting that human nature was not so entirely depraved, but that from it, by proper discipline, some good thing might proceed without the aid of grace ; and this good he does not confine to external acts, but extends to spiritual exercises ; therefore, according to him, the seeds of genuine piety must exist in our corrupt nature previous to regeneration.

Chemnicus, from whose EXAMEN the preceding account is taken, gives his own views and those of his brethren on this subject ; an abstract of which we will here insert, and which may be considered as expressive of the opinions of all the reformers, as this defence of their opinions met with universal approbation.

He utterly denies the truth of the principle asserted by Andradus, that in the original constitution of man, there existed a tendency to disorder, which was only restrained by the superadded gift of righteousness ; and maintains, that man in his state of original integrity possessed perfectly the image of God, which consisted in a conformity to his law ; so that with his whole heart and mind, with all the faculties of the soul, and all the appetites and members of the body, there was perfect strength, and no tendency to excess or evil. The law of God which required him to love his Creator with all his soul, and mind, and strength, was fully written in his heart, to which there was a perfect conformity in every thought and desire. There existed, therefore, in man thus pure and holy, nothing of that struggling of carnal appetites and desires against spiritual exercises which is now experienced by the regenerate, and which is called concupiscence. Now the law of God requires a complete conformity to its precepts in our acts, and in the whole frame and state of our minds, and where this is not found condemns us as sinners. Experience, as well as the word of God, teaches that man's mind in its unrenewed condition, instead of being illumined with the rays of truth, is replete with horrible darkness ; that his will is turned in aversion from God, and indulges enmity towards him ; that the affections are perverse ; and that in all the powers there is a horrible *αραξία* and depravation, so far as relates to spiritual things. Then this able polemic goes on to adduce the texts of scripture which bear on this point, which we shall at present omit ; and only remark, that no modern author has insisted more strenuously on the depth of original sin, and the total depravity of the human heart in all ages and in all persons. As to the seat of depravity, he says that the scriptures refer it to the

mind, the will, and the heart; it has infested all our faculties, and commences with our very being.

“Nor,” says he, “need we fear, as does Andradius, lest we should exaggerate the evil and extent of our innate corruption; for if we attend to the language of scripture, we shall be convinced that the depth of the disease exceeds all conception; as says David, ‘who can understand his errors?’ And Jeremiah, ‘the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?’ The papists acknowledge that original sin exists, but pretend that it is not safe to define what it is; and allege that the ancient church never defined it. But let the impartial reader only compare the awful descriptions of this evil in the word of God with the frigid, mitigating discourses of the papists, and their absurd philosophising respecting *puris naturalibus*, and he will be convinced that their doctrine is not that of the Bible. And as to the pretence of Andradius, that the council of Trent did not think proper to give any definition of original sin, we oppose to it the explicit testimony of the Holy Spirit repeatedly given in the scriptures, in which the nature of this fountain of all iniquity is clearly exhibited. And in regard to the fathers, they certainly call it *the vice of our nature, pollution, inbred corruption, &c.*” And he concludes his proofs of the doctrine of original sin with the following weighty sentence: “Et quando Domini os loquitur omnis caro debet silere, coelum et terra auscultare: Andradius vero mavult cum concilio Tridentino opinari, quam cum scriptura credere.”

The doctrine of total depravity, derived as an inheritance from our first father, is not inculcated more strongly by any writer than by Luther, in his work, entitled “*DE SERVO ARBITRIO*,” written against the celebrated Erasmus. It was our first purpose to have given an abridgment of this treatise of the great reformer; but Luther’s style and manner are so peculiar, that his writings do not bear to be abridged without much loss; and having met with a treatise on the subject of original sin, by a celebrated professor of the Lutheran church, D. G. Sohnius, who lived and wrote in the sixteenth century, we have concluded to lay before our readers an abstract of this discourse, from which may be learned what views were entertained on this subject, in the age immediately after that of Luther and Calvin. This theologian received the first part of his education at Marpurg, but when he was only fifteen years of age his residence was transferred to Wittenberg, A. D. 1589, where his progress in learning was astonishing. At first his extraordinary talents were most assiduously devoted to the study of the civil law: but, in the twenty-first year of his age, he seems to have been led, by a remarkable divine influence on his mind, to relinquish the profession which he had chosen, and devote himself to theology, which he pursued with unremitting ardour at Marpurg for two years, when his proficiency was so remarkable, that although no more than twenty-three years of age, he was made theological professor, and continued in this office to give instructions



to candidates for the ministry with extraordinary diligence and conspicuous success for ten years. But differing in opinion with some of his older brethren, respecting the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body, which he strenuously opposed, and also in some other points of theology; for the sake of a good conscience he resigned his office at Marpurg; but after a very short interval, such was his celebrity, he received two invitations, the one from Prince Casimir to become professor of theology at Heidelberg, and the other to a similar station at Herborn. He accepted the first, and was inaugurated July 18, 1584. In this situation he conducted himself with consummate wisdom and incessant diligence, in promoting the cause of truth, and by giving his aid and influence to every enterprise for the benefit of learning and religion; and A. D. 1588, he was chosen one of the ecclesiastical counsellors and senators, but without any interference with his office as professor. But this extraordinary young man soon finished his work upon earth. While in the midst of his useful labours, and when the influence of his peaceful and pious example had become extensive, he was unexpectedly taken out of the world by a pleurisy, in the thirty-seventh year of his age. His theological writings, in Latin, were published soon after his decease, including something like a system of theology; and are remarkable for profound research and accurate discrimination, as we think will be acknowledged by all who impartially peruse the following translation, or rather abstract, of his treatise on original sin. But our object in bringing forward this work is not so much for the sake of its explanations and arguments, in all of which we do not concur, as to furnish the inquisitive reader with a full view of the opinions of Protestants on this point, in the period immediately succeeding the reformation. And no one acquainted with ecclesiastical history will suppose that the doctrines here inculcated were peculiar to this author: the very same are found in the works of every Protestant writer of credit in that age.

The first part of the treatise of Sohnnius, in which he discusses the nature of sin and its various distinctions, we omit, as not being now to our purpose: we shall therefore commence with his answer to the objections urged in his day against the doctrine of original sin, from which it will clearly be understood what opinions were then commonly entertained on this subject.

“Having given some account of the nature and divisions of sin, our next object will be to refute some of those errors which relate to original sin. The first question then is whether there is any such thing; and this inquiry is the more necessary, because many of the papists so extenuate original sin, that they will scarcely admit that it partakes of the nature of sin. And the Anabaptists have gone to the impudent length of asserting that original sin is a mere figment of Augustine. In opposition to this error of the Anabaptists and of some of the Romanists, we assert, that their doctrine is not countenanced by scripture, and therefore cannot be

true. They appeal, indeed, to Ezek. xviii. 20, where it is said, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; but the soul that sinneth it shall die." From which they infer, that the posterity of Adam cannot be guilty in consequence of his fall. To which it may be replied, that Ezekiel is not speaking of the sin of our first father and federal head, which was the sin of the whole species, but of the sins of individuals of the Jewish nation. In this sense, it is true that the son shall not bear the punishment of his father's sin, unless by imitation he is led to do the same; but the sin of Adam was not the sin of an individual, but of the whole race, for he represented the whole species. The first man stood in a situation in regard to his posterity which no other man ever did, and his first sin was theirs in a sense in which no other of his sins could be; for his after sins were personal, and he alone was answerable for them; but his first sin was public, and that which brought death upon all his posterity. The gifts with which Adam was endowed, if they had been retained, would have been for the benefit of all his posterity, but being lost, they were not only forfeited for himself but for them. For as Levi paid tithes while in the loins of his progenitor Abraham, so the whole human race were included in Adam, to stand or fall with him. Hence Paul, in Rom. v., says, that Adam, was a type of Christ; so that "*as by* the disobedience of the first Adam many were constituted sinners, by the obedience of the second Adam many were constituted righteous." In this passage it is clearly signified, that the integrity which was given to our first father would have been available for our benefit if he had stood firmly in innocence: but that it was also committed to him to forfeit and lose all blessings for his posterity as well as for himself, if he should prove disobedient. This was the event, and accordingly the precious deposit with which he was intrusted for the whole human race, was lost. Now, this being the state of the case, it is manifest that no son bears the sins of any other father as he does those of Adam; but the soul that sinneth in the common administration of God's government, dies: but surely this general principle in relation to sin and punishment, does not in the least affect our condition as fallen in the fall of our federal head and representative. The son does not bear, commonly, the sins of his other progenitors with which he has nothing to do, but he does and must bear the first sin of Adam, which was his own; for though not guilty of the act in his own person, he did commit it by his representative.

2. Another argument brought against the doctrine of original sin is, that what is not voluntary cannot be sinful, because nothing can have the nature of sin which does not proceed from the exercise of understanding and choice; but what is called original sin, especially in infants, is not voluntary, therefore it cannot possess the nature of sin.

The maxim on which this argument rests is acknowledged in courts of justice among men; but it ought not to be transferred

to the church, so as to affect the doctrine of original sin, which she always held and believed. Moreover, this maxim has relation altogether to actual sins, but not to original sin: and it is repugnant to the declaration of Paul, Rom. vii., *What I will that I do not, but what I hate that I do.* And Gal. v., *The spirit lusteth against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* Augustine, in his *Retractations*, lib. i., c. 13, declares, “that this political maxim ought to have no place in relation to this point.” And in his book against Julian he says, “*Frustra putas ideo in parvulis nullum esse delictum, quia sine voluntate, quæ in illis nulla est, esse non potest.*” That is, “In vain do you pretend that there can be no sin in infants, because they are not and cannot be the subjects of voluntary exercise.” The maxim is true enough in regard to our own proper acts, but can by no means be admitted in relation to the contagion of original sin; which, however, had its origin in the voluntary act of the first man.

3. A third argument against original sin is that all sin consists in acts, but infants are capable of no acts, therefore they cannot be the subjects of sin; for, *to sin* is an active verb, and signifies to do something actively; original sin, therefore, cannot exist.

To which it may be answered, that in the Hebrew language the words which signify “to sin,” express not only acts, but habits; not only positive actions, but defects and inherent pravity which is born with us.

4. It is again argued that that which is the property of an individual cannot be propagated through a whole race, but the sin of our first parents was the property of those individuals, and cannot be communicated to their posterity.

It is true that the qualities or properties of individuals are not universally propagated through the whole species, except such as are of the nature of *ἀδυναμία* or imperfections; for these are constantly propagated through the whole race. For example, that corruption of human nature which is the cause of death, whatever it may be, is universally propagated, for all the descendants of Adam are mortal; so also original sin is *ἀδυναμία*, or a natural impotency, or a defect, or a depraved inclination, or *ἀραξία*—a disorder of the affections of the mind. Besides, the proposition on which the argument is founded is only true of separable qualities, but does not apply at all to such as are inseparable and which perpetually inhere in the subject, so that they cannot even in thought be severed from it. We do in fact witness many evils which are propagated from both parents. Moreover, the proposition stated above is only true of those qualities which are only found in some individuals, but not to those which are common to the whole species; but original sin is not a quality of a few individuals, but of the whole race; for Adam was the representative of the whole race, and forfeited that *depositum* with which he was intrusted as the head of the whole family.

5. It is again alleged that punishments are not sins, but those



defects and irregular inclinations which belong to human nature are the punishment of the sin of the first man, and cannot be of the nature of sin.

Here again there is an application of a political maxim to a subject to which it does not belong ; for it is a fact clearly established in the divine government, that the privation of the divine image and favour is both a sin and a punishment, but in different respects. In respect to God inflicting it, it is a punishment, for he in just judgment may deprive his creatures of his grace ; but in respect to man, this privation is a sin which by his own fault he has brought upon himself and admitted into his own soul.

6. It is again objected, that nature being from God must be good : therefore there can be no such thing as original sin or a vitiated nature.

To which it may be replied that nature was good before the fall, and before sin entered to corrupt it ; and nature still, so far as it is the work of God, is good ; that is, the substance of the soul, the faculties and the natural principle of rational action are good ; but nature, as it is depraved, is not the work of God, but something added to his work, namely, *ἀταξία*, or disorder and corruption in the faculties which God created in a state of order and integrity. God is the creator and preserver of the faculties, but not of the sin.

7. The Anabaptists argue that Adam having been received into favour, was in a state of grace when his children were procreated ; and therefore, upon the principle that everything begets its like, he could not propagate offspring infected with original sin.

Answer. There is more in the conclusion than in the premises ; for the procreation of offspring is not according to grace, but according to nature, so that whatever the nature of man is since the fall, that only can be propagated. Adam obtained freedom from guilt, not from nature but from grace ; but grace cannot be propagated. Man, therefore, cannot propagate anything but that corrupt nature derived from the fall.

Moreover, the regenerate are not perfectly delivered from the evil nature of sin, which still dwells in them, and renders imperfect all that they do. So far as the regenerate act from nature, they act sinfully : all the good which is in them is from the spirit of God, to whom they are indebted for every good thought : it is evident, therefore, that grace, for every motion of which we are dependent on another agent, cannot be propagated : but sin, consisting in a defect or disorder of our nature, and having its origin and proper seat in our own nature, may be propagated. “ In me, that is, in my flesh,” says Paul, “ there dwelleth no good thing.” “ That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” And we never hear of a man being regenerated by a natural birth from pious parents, but the regenerate are “ born of the Spirit—born of God.” They further allege, indeed, that men cannot propagate what they do not possess ; and therefore the regenerate cannot communicate original sin to their offspring, for the guilt of all their sins is removed by a full

pardon. To which we reply as before, that though it is true that a man cannot propagate what he has not, yet as far as nature prevails, all men are sinful, and it is that which properly belongs to our nature which is capable of being propagated; therefore, when a sinful nature is communicated to posterity, it is the communication of what a man does possess; for neither remission of sins nor the infusion of grace do in the least affect the laws by which the propagation of the human species is regulated, for reasons already stated.

8. But the opposers of the doctrine of original sin even appeal to scripture for support to their opinion. They allege Rom. xi. 6, and 1 Cor. vii. 14, as texts which declare in favour of the children of the saints being born free from original sin. In the former, Paul asserts, "That if the root be holy, so are the branches." But they are deceived by the mere sound of a word, for "holiness" in this place does not refer to internal moral qualities, but to external consecration: whatever is devoted solemnly to the service of God, or has a relation to his worship, is called *holy*. Thus the tabernacle, the altar, the ark, the sacrifices, the priests, and even Jerusalem itself, were holy. The whole nation of Israel, as being in covenant with God, are continually spoken of as "a holy people;" and as the promises of God's covenant with Abraham have respect to his posterity even to the end of the world; so, in a certain sense, these branches which are now broken off, are holy, as they stand in a peculiar relation to God, which other people do not. And in the latter passage, the children of believers are called "holy" on account of their relation to the Christian church, as being connected with the visible church by baptism, or as being capable of such connection in consequence of their relation to parents who are members of the church. For God makes the same promise to each believer which he formerly made to Abraham, *I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee*. But this text by no means signifies that the children of believers are born in a state free from all pollution.

9. It is again objected that the phrase "original sin," never occurs in scripture, and never should have been introduced into the church.

Answer. Many words are conveniently used in theology which are not found in scripture; and this must be the case where the truth is denied and error introduced: and appropriate words and phrases, expressing a clear and definite meaning, save us the necessity of much circumlocution. Now the truth is, that the scriptures use various words to express what is usually denominated "sin," without entering into the distinction between original and actual sin; but the idea conveyed by the phrase, "original sin," can be logically inferred from numerous passages of scripture, as we shall show presently. When the Pelagians denied the doctrine of original sin, which the church had before held without dispute, the orthodox fathers invented this name for the sake of avoiding all ambiguity, and that the matter in dispute might be clearly and dis-

tinctly exhibited ; for the Pelagians strenuously maintained that all sins were actual, or consisted in acts ; but the orthodox maintained, that besides the acts of sin, there existed a corruption of nature,—an inherent moral disorder in the faculties, which, for convenience, they denominated “ original sin.”

Having shown that the doctrine of those who oppose original sin is not contained in scripture, nor can be proved from it ; we now proceed to demonstrate, that it is absolutely repugnant to the testimony of God, in his word ; and therefore is a false doctrine, which should be exterminated from the church.

The first testimony which we adduce is from Genesis v. 5, “ And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ;” and Gen. viii. 21, “ For the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.” The objection to this testimony is, “ that this is only spoken of adults, and only shows that there is in man a proneness to go astray ; but nothing is here said respecting a hereditary corruption of the human heart.” But is it not evident that if all the thoughts and imaginations of the heart are constantly evil from youth upwards, the nature of man must be corrupt ? What stronger evidence could there be of a corruption of nature than the fact that all men sin and do nothing else but sin, from the moment that they are capable of actual transgression ? An effect so universal can never be accounted for by imitation, for children begin to sin before they have much opportunity of imitating the sins of others, and even when the examples before them are pious and good. If from the fruits of holiness we may infer that the tree is good, then certainly on the same principle, from a production of bad fruit it is fairly concluded that the nature is evil. “ A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good ; but an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, that which is evil.” “ Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Our next testimony we take from Rom. iii. 10. “ There is none righteous, no not one.” Now if man’s nature be not corrupt, how can it be accounted for on any rational principles, that all men, without the exception of one, should be unrighteous ? To this proof, indeed, Albert Pighius excepts that it relates to the Jewish nation, and not to the whole race of man. But this is contrary to the express design of the apostle in this passage, which was to prove that both Jews and Gentiles were all under sin and wrath, and all stood in absolute need of salvation by faith in Christ. And in the preceding verse he explicitly declares that he had “ proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.” And his general conclusion is, “ That all the world may become guilty before God,” Indeed, if the nation of the Jews only was referred to in this passage, yet it might be fairly inferred that all other nations were in the same corrupt condition ; for why should it be supposed that universal depravity should be confined to this one people ? And history confirms the sentence of the apostle, for it represents



other nations as wicked as the Jews. The apostle must, therefore, be considered as describing the moral condition, not of one nation or one age, but of human nature in all countries and at all times; so far as it is not restored by Christ.

A third testimony for original sin is found in Rom. vii., where Paul, in strong language, describes the power and depth of indwelling sin, as experienced by himself, now in his renewed state. He calls it "a law of sin and death," as working in him "all manner of concupiscence;" as "deceiving him." And he speaks of it as an abiding principle—"sin that dwelleth in me." As an evil ever present with him in all his exertions to do good; "as a law in his members warring against the law of his mind;" so that he exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The Pelagians, it is true, will not agree that Paul is here speaking in his own person, but pretend that he personates a Jew under conviction of the duty which the law requires, but sensible of his inability to comply with the demands of the law. But that the apostle is here giving us his own experience is evident from all the circumstances of the case; which opinion is not only held by Augustine in his controversy with Julian, but was maintained by the fathers who preceded him, particularly Cyprian and Hilary.

Other testimonies not less direct and conclusive are, Job xv. 14, "What is man that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?"

Psalm li. 5, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

John iii. 3, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Rom. v. 12, "As by one man sin entered into the world,—and so death passed upon all men, because that all have sinned." On this text it is worthy of remark that it is not only asserted that the punishment of death hath passed upon all men, but the reason is added, namely, "because all have sinned;" so that the fault and punishment, the guilt and pollution, are by the apostle joined together.

Rom. v. 19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."

Rom. viii. 7, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Ephes. ii. 3, "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

And as infants die, as universal experience teaches, it is evident that they must be chargeable with sin; for Paul clearly represents sin as the cause of death—of the death of all men. "And the wages of sin is death."

It would be tedious to enumerate all the objections which Pelagians and others make to the interpretation of these texts. The specimen given above may be taken as an evidence that they never can succeed in proving that their doctrine is consonant with the testimony of God in the holy scriptures.

Hitherto we have disputed with those of the Papists and Ana-

baptists who deny the existence of original sin altogether; but now we come to consider the opinion of those who acknowledge original sin, but insist that it is not anything inherent in man at his birth, but only the guilt of another's sin imputed. This opinion is maintained by some of the papists, who think that original sin is nothing else than the debt of punishment contracted from the sin of Adam, but that nothing of the pollution of sin is propagated by natural generation. . A.D. 1542, Pighius, after the conference which was held at Worms, expressed his opinion in writing as follows: "Original sin does not consist in any defect, nor in any vice, nor depravation of nature; not in any corrupt quality nor inherent vicious habit in us, but solely in our subjection to the punishment of the first sin; that is, in *contracted guilt*, without anything of depravity in our nature."

It is a sufficient refutation of this doctrine that it is nowhere found in scripture, and nothing should be received as an article of faith which cannot be proved from this source. Its abettors do indeed endeavour to establish it by an appeal to the Bible, but they are obliged to beg the very point in dispute, as will soon be made to appear.

Pighius, the chief advocate for this opinion, brings forward Rom. v. 12, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Rom. v. 15, "By the offence of one, many are dead." Rom. v. 16, "For the judgment was by one to condemnation." Rom. v. 17, "For by one man's offence death reigned by one." Rom. v. 18, "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." In all these texts, says Pighius, the apostle attributes condemnation to the sin of Adam, and nothing else. To which it may be replied, that when the apostle declares that "sin had entered into the world," he does not mean, merely, that Adam had become a sinner, but that it had come upon all his descendants; that is, upon all men in the world; for he does not say in this place that *guilt* had entered, but that *sin* had entered into the world. And this is not left to be inferred, but is expressly asserted in the same verse: "*in whom* all have sinned;" or, "*for that* all have sinned." Moreover, when he declares that all are subject to death and condemnation by the sin of one, it is a just inference that they are all partakers of his sin, and are born in a state of moral pollution. In the 19th verse it is said, "By the disobedience of one many are constituted sinners;" now to be constituted sinners, includes the idea not only of being made subject to the penalty, but partaking of the nature of sin; for they who are entirely free from the stain of sin, cannot with propriety be called "sinners." Again, the apostle in this chapter teaches, that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, to deliver us from death and reconcile us to God;" certainly he died for none but sinners: but if infants are not sinners then Christ did not die for them, nor do they belong to him as their Saviour; which is most absurd.

"But," says Pighius, "infants being neither endued with the

knowledge of the law, nor with freedom of will, are not moral agents, and are therefore incapable of obedience or disobedience; they cannot therefore be the subjects of sin, and cannot be bound to endure the penalty of the law on any other account than for the sin of another."

Answer. Although infants have not the exercise of free-will, and are not moral agents, yet they possess a nature not conformable to the law of God: they are not such as the law demands that human beings should be, but are depraved; "children of wrath," and guilty on account of their own personal depravity: for the authorized definition of sin is *ἀνομία*, that is, whatever is repugnant to the law of God.

But they insist further, "that God being the author of nature, if that be depraved, he must be the author of sin."

To which we reply in the words of Augustine: "Both are propagated together, nature and the depravity of nature; one of which is good, the other evil: the first is derived from the bounty of our Creator, the latter must be attributed to our original condemnation. The first has for its cause the good pleasure of God, the latter the perverse will of the first man: *that* exhibits God as the former of the creatures, *this* as the punisher of disobedience. Finally, the same Christ for the creation of our nature, is the maker of man; but for the healing of the disease of this nature became man."

Again, this doctrine may be refuted by express testimonies from scripture; and ought therefore to be rejected as unsound. Gen. v. 3, "Adam begat Seth in his own image." Job xiv. 4, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?—not one." Psalm li. 5, "For I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Rom. v. 19, "By the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners." Ephes. iii. 2, "And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others;" that is, we were born subject to condemnation, because born in a corrupt state. From all which passages it appears that original sin does not consist merely in guilt or liableness to punishment, but in a moral depravation of the whole nature; and that it is not contracted by imitation, but by generation. Paul often speaks of that which we call "original sin" under the general name of "sin." In Rom. vi. 8, he speaks of the "old man" being crucified; of the "body of sin" being destroyed; and in chap. vii. he speaks of being "sold under sin," of no good thing dwelling in his flesh; of evil being present with him when he would do good; and of being led captive by "the law of sin" in his members.

Another cogent proof of the heterodoxy of this doctrine may be derived from the baptism of infants, which certainly supposes that they are conceived and born in sin.

It is also worthy of observation that spiritual regeneration is, in scripture, continually put in contrast with "the flesh," and with our



fleshly birth. But where is the propriety of this, if the flesh is naturally free from stain?

And finally, the catholic church has ever held an opinion contrary to the one which is now opposed. Augustine, in his second book against Pelagius and Cœlestius, expresses most explicitly what we maintain: "Whosoever," says he, "contends that human nature, in any age, does not need the second Adam as a physician, on the ground that it has not been vitiated in the first Adam, does not fall into an error which may be held without injury to the rule of faith; but by that very rule by which we are constituted Christians, is convicted of being an enemy to the grace of God."

It is again disputed, whether concupiscence, or that disease of our nature which renders us prone to sin, is itself of the nature of sin. This the papists deny; we affirm.

They allege that whatever exists in us necessarily, and is not from ourselves, but from another, cannot be of the nature of sin; but this is the fact in regard to concupiscence, *ergo*, &c.

Answer. In a merely political judgment this may be correct, but not in that which is divine. And if the principle here asserted was sound, it would prove too much: it would prove that even the *acts* of concupiscence are not sinful: for there is a sort of necessity for these, supposing the principle of concupiscence to exist in the soul.

It is next objected, that that which is wholly the work of God, as is the whole nature of man, cannot be corrupt, and therefore whatever belongs to this nature as it comes from the hand of God, cannot be otherwise than free from sin.

If there were any force in this argument, it would prove that there could be no such thing as sin in the universe, for all creatures are not only dependent on God for existence at first, but for continuance in being every moment; and if the power of God could not, consistently with its purity, be exerted to bring into existence the children of a corrupt parent, in a state of moral corruption, neither could it be to continue their being, which equally requires the exertion of omnipotence. But the truth is, so far as human nature or human actions are the effect of divine power, the work is good: the essential faculties of the mind and members of the body are good, and the entity of every human act is good; but the evil of our nature is received by natural generation, and is the consequence of the fall of our first parent, and the sinfulness of our acts must not be ascribed to God, "in whom we live and move," but to the perversity of our own wills.

But they allege that God inflicts this depravity on the race of men, and therefore it cannot partake of the nature of sin, without making God its author.

To which it may be replied that God inflicts it, as it is a punishment, but not as it is sin; that is, he withdraws all divine influence, and all the gifts of innocence with which the creature was originally endued in just judgment. Does not God in just displeasure

for obstinate continuance in sin, often send blindness of mind as a judgment: in the same manner he can inflict that pravity of nature which we bring into the world with us as a punishment for the sin of our first parents: that is, he withholds all those gifts and all that influence which are necessary to a state of moral purity. The texts of scripture which might be adduced to establish the doctrine which has been advanced, have already been cited, and need not now be repeated. But Albert Pighius asserts, that the divine law only prohibits vicious acts, not the latent qualities of the mind: the command says, "Thou shalt not covet," but it does not say thou shalt not have a disease which may induce you to covet. It is true the act only is mentioned in this prohibition, but the disposition is doubtless included: as in the sixth commandment it is only said, "thou shalt not kill;" and in the seventh, "thou shalt not commit adultery;" but we know from high authority, that in the one case the law is violated by sinful anger, and in the other by a wanton desire; so in the eighth commandment the act of theft only is forbidden expressly, but we know that to covet our neighbour's goods is sin; and in like manner, although the tenth commandment only prohibits expressly the act of concupiscence, yet undoubtedly the disease, or corrupt disposition from which the act proceeds, is included by implication in the prohibition. And this will appear very clearly by considering the preceptive part of the law: this requires that we should love God with all our heart, and mind, and strength; and of course whatever in us that is opposed to a compliance with this command is forbidden, but such an obstacle is this disease of concupiscence, therefore this being forbidden by the holy law of God is sinful. Infants, therefore, are children of wrath, because they have in them a disease of irregular propensity, although it has not yet been exerted.

Pighius still urges the objection already refuted in another form, that no law can prohibit equitably what it is impossible for the creature to avoid; but the infant can no more avoid being born with a proneness to irregular indulgence, than it could avoid coming into the world with the sense of touch or taste; he concludes, therefore, that concupiscence is not prohibited in the tenth commandment.

Now we answer, as before, that if it is true that nothing is forbidden which cannot be avoided, then sinful acts are not forbidden, for with a nature labouring under the disease of concupiscence, sinful acts cannot be avoided; and so the argument is not sound, since it proves too much; nay, the renewed themselves cannot avoid sin in this life, as Paul abundantly teaches in the 7th of Romans; therefore God does prohibit what we cannot avoid, and does command what we cannot perform.

The author then proceeds to refute the opinion of the Flaccians, that original sin corrupted the substance of the soul; an opinion industriously propagated by Flaccius Illyricus, one of the most learned of the reformers; and which was embraced and pertina-

ciously maintained in several places in Germany. But as this error is not now maintained by any with whom we are acquainted, we do not think it necessary to exhibit the elaborate and conclusive arguments by which Sohnius refutes it.

As we stated before, our object in giving an abstract of this treatise, is not so much to defend the doctrine of hereditary depravity, as to give a correct view of the state of opinion on this subject at the time of the reformation and afterwards. And it cannot fail to occur to the intelligent reader, that none of the objections now made to this doctrine are new, or supported by any new arguments. The whole ground of controversy now occupied by the various discordant opinions has been gone over before. And the result will probably be as before, that while those who adhere strictly to evangelical doctrine will continue to maintain the old doctrine, its opposers will deviate further and further from orthodoxy. There has never yet been an instance in the history of the church of the rejection of any doctrines of the Gospel, where the opposers of the truth have been contented to stop at the first step of departure from sound doctrine. If they who first adopt and propagate an error are sometimes restrained by habit, and by a lurking respect for the opinions of the wise and good, as also by a fear of incurring the censure of heresy, from going the full length which their principles require ; yet those who follow them in their error will not be kept back by such considerations. Indeed, the principles of self-defence require, that men who undertake to defend their opinions by argument, should endeavour to be consistent with themselves : and thus it commonly happens that what was originally a single error, soon draws after it the whole system of which it is a part. On this account it is incumbent on the friends of truth to oppose error in its commencement, and to endeavour to point out the consequences likely to result from its adoption ; and to us it appears that nothing is better calculated to show what will be the effect of a particular error, than to trace its former progress by the lights of ecclesiastical history.



## ESSAY VI.

# THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTATION.\*

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IN a previous Essay (No. IV.) we presented our readers with a condensed view of the early history of Pelagianism. In the course of that article it fell in our way to express our belief in the doctrine of Imputation, our conviction of its importance, and of its being generally received among orthodox Christians. This doctrine, our readers are aware, has long been, nominally at least, rejected by many of our New England brethren. Without much argument on the subject, it has been discarded as intrinsically absurd; and it has not unfrequently been presented as an unanswerable argument against other doctrines, that they lead to all the absurdities of this exploded dogma. We have long been convinced that the leading objections to this doctrine arose from an entire, and to us, an unaccountable misapprehension of its nature as held among Calvinists. We therefore thought it proper, and adapted to remove prejudices, to state the common views on this subject, that our brethren might see that they did not involve the absurdities which they imagined. Unfortunately, as far as the author of the article under review is concerned, our object has not been answered. The writer, who signs himself *A Protestant*, is evidently much dissatisfied with our opinions. His object, in his communication to the Spectator, is to impugn several of our statements, and to present his difficulties with regard to the doctrine itself. To our surprise, these difficulties are almost all founded on the very misapprehension which it was our object to correct. Although our readers, we think, will sympathize with us in our regret at many of the statements of this author, and feel hurt that he should have allowed himself to make the unguarded imputations contained in his piece, we are not sorry that we are called upon, by this direct appeal, to state more fully our views on this subject, and the grounds on which they rest.

\* Published in 1830, in review of an article in the June number of the Christian Spectator, entitled, "Inquiries respecting the Doctrine of Imputation."

Before proceeding to the doctrine of imputation and of the Protestant's difficulties, there are one or two subjects on which we would make a passing remark. This writer attributes to us great subserviency to the opinions of the fathers. Such expressions as the following clearly convey this imputation. "Can any one inform me to what age this 'orthodoxy' belongs; and where the history of it is to be found among the fathers whose authority is so much relied on by this historian?" P. 340. "Can the historian honestly say, with all his attachment to the fathers, &c." "Last of all, I would particularly request, if any writer should favour me with an answer to these inquiries, that *reasons*, and not *names*, may be given in support of his statements. If it be suggested that none but a heretic could ask such questions, I would reply that there are minds in our country which are not satisfied that calling hard names is argument; or that the *argumentum ad invidiam* is the happiest weapon which a meek and humble Christian can use. Men are apt to suspect that such arguments would not be employed, if better ones were at hand in their stead. I only add that I am *A Protestant*." And so are we, however unworthy that gentleman may think us of the title. We would not knowingly call any man master upon earth. We profess to believe, with him, that the Bible is the religion of Protestants; and that it matters little what men have taught, if the word of God does not support their doctrines. As we agree with him in these leading principles, we hope that he will agree with us in certain others. While we hold that the opinions of men are of no authority as to matters of faith, we at the same time believe that much respect is due to uniform opinions of the people of God; that there is a strong presumption in favour of any doctrine being taught in the Bible, if the great body of the pious readers of the Bible have from the beginning believed and loved it. We are free to confess, that it would startle us to hear that there was no antecedent probability that the doctrines of the deity of Christ, atonement, native depravity, are really taught in the word of God, if it can be made to appear that the church, in all ages, has believed these doctrines. And we think that a man places himself in a very unenviable situation, who undertakes to prove to the men of his generation, that the great body of the good and pious before him were utterly mistaken, and that he alone is right. Here is a phenomenon, which any man who assumes this position is bound at the outset to account for, that the Bible, a plain book as Protestants call it, should have been utterly misunderstood for more than a thousand years, by its most careful and competent readers. It will not meet this case, to tell us that this man or that man has held this or that absurdity; or that whole ages or communities of men, who neither read nor loved the scriptures, believed this or that heresy. This is not the question. It is simply this, is it not probable that what the vast majority of the most competent readers of a plain book, take to be its plain meaning, really is its meaning? We take it for granted, that the Pro-

testant would answer this question in the affirmative; and that, if arguing with Unitarians, he would not scruple to appeal to the fact, that the unprejudiced and pious en masse of every age have understood the Bible as teaching the divinity of Christ, as a presumptive argument in its favour. We suspect that he would go further, and that in giving the exposition of any passage he would fortify his own conclusions, by stating that he did not stand alone, but that others of the accurate and the learned had arrived at the same results. Now we think that a man who would do this, ought not to sneer at us on this very account. We know that it is easy to ring the changes, on want of independence, subserviency to the fathers, slavery to a system, and so on; but what effect does all this produce? It may excite prejudice, and lead the superficial to join in a sneer against men whom they suppose to a pitiable extent inferior to themselves; but does it convince anybody? Does it weaken the legitimate force of the argument from the concurrence of the pious in any doctrine? Does it produce any favourable impression on that class of readers whose approbation a writer should value?

We say, then, that the opinion of the church is entitled to respect, if for no other reason, at least as a presumptive argument for any doctrine, in favour of which this concurrent testimony can be cited. Whether the church has, with any important uniformity, held the doctrine of imputation, is a mere question of fact, and must be decided accordingly. If it can be fairly proved, let it pass for what it is worth. It binds no man's conscience; yet the Protestant himself would hardly say, that it was to him or others a matter of indifference. He greatly mistakes if he supposes that the opinion of a man who lived a thousand years ago, has any more weight with us than that of an equally pious and able man who may be still living. His telling us, therefore, that some of the men who are called fathers, held sundry very extravagant opinions, is really saying very little in answer to the argument from the consent of the good and great as to the plain meaning of a plain book. We are not now assuming the fact, that the church has, with perfect unanimity, gathered the doctrine of imputation from the word of God; but exhibiting the ground and nature of the respect due to the uniform opinion of God's people.

There is another point of view in which, we presume, the Protestant will agree with us in thinking this opinion entitled to respect. Truth and piety are intimately related. A man's moral and religious opinions are the expression of his moral and religious feelings. Hence there are certain opinions which we view with abhorrence, because they express the greatest depravity. Now we say, and the Protestant doubtless will join us in saying, that it is no very desirable thing for a man to throw himself out of communion with the great body of the pious in every age, and place himself in communion of language and opinion with the opposers of vital godliness. We think that any man, who had any proper sense of the



deceitfulness of his own heart, the weakness of his understanding, and of the vital connection between truth and piety, would hesitate long before he avowed himself opposed to the views which have for ages been found in connection with true religion, and became the advocate of doctrines which the opposers of piety have been the foremost in defending.

These are mainly the grounds on which our respect for the opinions of the church rests, and these remarks show the extent of that respect. So far the Protestant would go with us; further we have not gone. If we have cited the concurrent opinion of the church improperly; if we have supposed the great body of the people of God to have believed, what they did not believe—let the Protestant set us right, and we shall be thankful. But do not let him join men, with whom he would scorn to be associated, in running over the common-places of free inquiry, minds that think, &c., &c.

A word as to the *argumentum ad invidiam*. We are of the number of those who agree with this writer in thinking that "this is not the happiest weapon which a meek and lowly Christian can use," nay, that it is utterly unworthy of his character to use it at all. We think, too, that the charge of having used it should not be lightly made. Unless we are mistaken as to the nature of this argument, the charge, in the present instance, is unfounded. We understand an *argumentum ad invidiam* to be one, which is designed, not to prove the incorrectness of any opinion, but to cast unmerited odium upon those who hold it. Such was not the design of the article to which the Protestant objects. Every one knows, that within a few years, there has been more or less discussion in this country respecting sin and grace. We thought it would be useful, to present our readers with a short historical view of the various controversies which have existed in the church on these subjects. We commenced with the earliest and one of the most important; and gave, to the best of our ability, an account of the Pelagian controversy. We called no man a Pelagian, and designed to prove no man such, and therefore made little application of the history to present discussions. So far as the modern opinions differ from the ancient, there was no ground for such application, and none such was intended. So far as they agree, it is no more an *argumentum ad invidiam* to exhibit the agreement, than it is to call Belsham a Socinian, or Whitby an anti-Calvinist. If no man agrees with Pelagius in confining morality to acts of choice; in maintaining that men are not morally depraved, before they voluntarily violate a known law, and that God cannot prevent sin in a moral system; then is no man affected by the exhibition of the Pelagian system. But if there are those who assume this ground, and proclaim it, it does them no injustice to say that they do so. So long, however, as these brethren hold to a moral certainty that all men will sin the moment they become moral agents; that the first sin leads to entire moral depravity; and that an immediate influence of the Spirit is necessary in conversion, they differ from that system in

these important points. Wherein they agree and wherein they differ, should be known in justice to them, as well as for the benefit of others. How far the assumption of the fundamental principles of a system has a tendency to lead to its thorough adoption, every man must judge for himself. For ourselves, we fear the worst: because, we think consistency requires an advance, and because history informs us, that when men have taken the first step, they or their followers soon take the second. Now, we ask, what is there invidious in this history of opinions, or in this expression of apprehension? apprehension of what? of injury to the cause of vital piety. Is there any sin in expressing this apprehension, when conscientiously entertained? Suppose we had gone further than we did, and exhibited, what we supposed our readers capable of observing, the exact points of agreement and disagreement between the two systems, would there have been the least injustice in such a proceeding? We think not, and therefore think the charge of using the argumentum ad invidiam out of place. Let us now request our author to review his own piece, and ask himself, what is its whole spirit and tendency (we do not say design). Is it not to cast on us the odium of being opposed to free investigation, of "calling hard names for argument," of being held in bondage to a system, of relying on *names* instead of *reasons*; in short, of being anti-protestants? Would not a little reflection have prevented his casting this stone?

There is a sensitiveness about *some* of our New England brethren, that has often surprised us. If any one in this quarter ventures to question the tendency of their opinions, or express apprehension as to their results, all of love and catholicism that there is within them, is shocked at the suggestion, and we are borne down with the cry, "you are breaking the bonds of charity," "you argue ad invidiam," &c.; and yet these same brethren can find it in their hearts to say, that we are setting "in motion all the enemies of religion;"\* that our doctrines (though known to be held by a decided majority of evangelical Christendom) are exploded absurdities;† that we believe in physical depravity and physical regeneration; and teach, "that God first creates a wrong essence, and then creates a right one; first plunges into the fire and then pulls out again"‡ (a misrepresentation as gross as the language is irreverent). They do all this, without appearing to dream that there is aught in it to justify complaint, or to trouble the waters of peace. However, let this pass. We love peace, and shall try to promote it. Our readers will soon see that we need our full share of self-command and forbearance.

The Protestant quotes on p. 339, the following passage from our former article: "Now we confess ourselves to be of the number of those who believe, whatever reproach it may bring upon us from

\* Prof. Stuart's Examination of the Review of the A. E. Society, p. 93.

† Review of Harvey and Taylor on Human Depravity, in the Christian Spectator.

‡ Fitch's Inquiry and Reply, p. 89.

ascertain quarter, that if the doctrine of imputation be given up, the whole doctrine of original sin must be abandoned. And if this doctrine be relinquished, then the whole doctrine of redemption must fall; and what may then be left of Christianity, they may contend for that will; but for ourselves, we shall be of opinion that what remains will not be worth a serious struggle." He then proceeds, "Here then permit me to inquire, have men no sins of *their own* from which they need to be redeemed? Or is it true, as the historian's position seems plainly to imply, that the whole object of Christ's death was to redeem men from a sin which is *not their own*? And is this sin, then, which (to use the writer's own words) is not 'strictly and properly *theirs*, for those not yet born could not perform an act' (p. 90); is this sin so much greater than all the sins that men have themselves committed in their own persons, that the death of Christ, or the redemption wrought by him, is not even to be named as having respect to these transgressions, and nothing of Christianity is left, unless you assume the position that redeeming blood is designed simply to expiate *original* sin? Can any one inform me to what age this 'orthodoxy' belongs; and where the history of it is to be found among the fathers, whose authority is so much relied on by this historian?" Again; on p. 341, he quotes Rom. iv. 15, as an argument against imputation, "Where no law is, there is no transgression," and then inquires, "But how can this be, where there is not only *original* sin prior to all knowledge of law, but original sin so great as to absorb the whole of the redemption of Christ; so that the redemption is annulled, if we consider it as expiating the guilt of actual violations of known law, and there is nothing left in the Gospel worth contending for."

We must now be permitted to take our turn as interrogators. We seriously, then, put it to that gentleman's conscience to say whether he really believes that the conductors of this work, or our historian, which is the same thing, actually hold that "the whole object of Christ's death was to redeem men from a sin which is not their own," and has no reference to "actual violations of known law?" If he does, we can only express our astonishment at the readiness with which he can believe his brethren capable of holding and advancing the most monstrous opinions, in the face of their open and repeated declarations of adherence to a confession which notoriously teaches the very reverse. We cannot, however, think that the writer, whoever he may be, seriously entertains this idea. Our complaint is, that he should have been so heedless as to seize on the first impression which an isolated passage made on his mind, and without stopping to inquire whether he apprehended its meaning aright, or whether his interpretation was at all consistent with the known opinions of the conductors of this work, should at once proceed to hold up and denounce this first and false impression as the "orthodoxy" of the Biblical Repertory. The gentleman, on the slightest reflection, will perceive, that just so far as confidence is reposed in his discrimination and judgment, the readers of the



Spectator will be led to believe that we hold, "that redeeming blood is designed simply to expiate original sin," "that the redemption is annulled if we consider it as expiating the guilt of actual violations of known law and there is nothing left in the Gospel worth contending for." He must know, too, that those who adopt this idea on the faith of his assertion, must be filled with astonishment and contempt for men who, they suppose, hold this opinion; and moreover, that the Spectator will go into many hands where a correction from us of this marvellous misapprehension can never come. He may hence judge how serious an injury may be done, in one inconsiderate moment, by ascribing, on utterly insufficient grounds, obnoxious opinions to his brethren. Let us now see what reason the gentleman has for this wonderful statement. We had ventured to agree with the Christian Spectator, No. 2, p. 349, that the doctrine of original sin could not be consistently held, if that of imputation were abandoned. And we had made bold to say, with President Edwards,\* that the rejection of the doctrine of original sin rendered redemption unnecessary. Why? Because actual sins need no redemption, as the author most amazingly supposes? No. But because, as Edwards supposed and as we suppose, the salvation of men could have been effected without it, by merely preserving pure and unfallen children from sinning, and thus needing a Saviour. Had our author attempted to show that God could not do this, or that these doctrines are not thus intimately related, we should not have had a word to object as to the propriety of such a course, whatever we might have thought of his arguments. But that a paragraph, which expresses nothing more than he might find in any and every Calvinistic book he ever condescended to look into, should be so interpreted as to make us teach an almost unheard of doctrine, is indeed passing strange. Why has he not discovered and long ago denounced this palpable absurdity of Calvinism? for surely we have said nothing new upon the subject. We hope, indeed, that the readers of the Spectator will have discrimination enough to see, what that gentleman's rapidity of mind prevented his discovering, that the paragraph in question contains nothing but a common and very harmless opinion, which the majority of them, we trust, have heard from the nursery and pulpit from their earliest years. We shall not be expected to say much in reply to the "inquiry," "to what age this orthodoxy (making the death of Christ refer only to original sin) belongs?" As it is the poles apart from any doctrine we have ever believed or taught, we feel no special interest in the investigation. We must, therefore, leave to the discoverer of the heresy the task of tracing its history. Our present concern is with the doctrine of imputation.

It has struck us as somewhat surprising, that while the Protest-

\* "It will follow," says Edwards, "on our author's principles (that is, on the denial of original sin and the assertion of sufficient power to do our duty), not only with respect to infants, but even *adult* persons, that redemption is *needless*, and Christ is dead in vain."—*On Original Sin*, vol. ii., p. 515.

ant represents us as teaching a doctrine involving the greatest absurdities, the editors of the *Spectator* regard the matter in a very different light. They think we have renounced the old doctrine, and are now teaching one which is substantially their own. They say:—

“We have inserted the above communication (the Protestant’s) at the particular request of a respected correspondent, whose familiarity with the subject entitles his inquiries to a serious consideration. We cannot but think, however, that the question respecting the imputation of Adam’s sin to his descendants, has become, in this country at least, chiefly a dispute about words. The historian, if we understand his statements, has abandoned the ground of Edwards and other standard writers on this subject. He states unequivocally, that Adam’s ‘first act of transgression,’ was ‘not *strictly* and *properly* that of his descendants (for those not yet born could not perform an act), but interpretatively, or by imputation.’ P. 90. Now Edwards affirms the direct contrary. ‘The sin of the apostasy is not theirs merely because God imputes it to them, but it is *truly* and *properly* theirs, and on *that* ground God imputes it to them.’—*Orig. Sin*, p. 4, chap. 3. Stapfer too lays down the doctrine of imputation in the same way.” Again; “We are glad likewise to see him proceed one step farther. He not only denies that we had any share in the *act*, but even in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, in the ordinary acceptance of that term. He tells us ‘that the ill-desert of one man cannot be transferred to another;’ that ‘imputation does not imply a transfer of moral acts or *moral character*, but the opposite of REMISSION.’ To impute, according to this explanation of the term, is simply to *hold* the descendants of Adam SUBJECT to the ‘consequences’ of his fall, though not sharing in the act nor its criminality.” “Now in this statement all who bear the name of Calvinists will unite, and they all regard it as exhibiting a cardinal doctrine of the Gospel. And we cannot but think that most of the disputes on this subject, result simply from a diversity in the use of terms.”—Pp. 342, 343.

We presume the Protestant will consider these remarks of the editors as reflecting rather severely on his want of discrimination. Certain it is, that one or the other must be under a great mistake. For if our statement is substantially one in which “all who bear the name of Calvinists will unite,” and which “they all regard as exhibiting a cardinal doctrine of the Gospel,” then it is very strange that the Protestant should hold us up as teaching so many absurdities, and so unceremoniously sneer at our orthodoxy. In this difference between the editors and their correspondent, we very naturally take sides with the former, and wish to be considered as teaching nothing but plain common Calvinistic doctrine. There is a question at issue, however, between the editors and ourselves. Have we abandoned the old doctrine, as they affirm, or have they been labouring under a misapprehension as to its nature? Here then we have a question of fact, and with the Protestant’s permission, we shall appeal to names for its decision.

We would say in the out-set, that the views which we have expressed are those which we have always entertained, and which we have always understood our brethren, who believe the doctrine of imputation, to hold. If there is any departure, therefore, in them from the opinions of “standard writers on the subject,” it is a departure of long standing, and widely extended. We are persuaded

ded, however, that the Spectator is mistaken as to this point, and that the view which we have presented of imputation, is that held by Calvinists and the Reformed churches generally.

As we are not prepared to adopt the Spectator's exposition of our opinions, we proceed to state how we hold the doctrine in question. In imputation, there is, first, an ascription of something to those concerned; and secondly, a determination to deal with them accordingly. Sometimes one, and sometimes the other idea predominates. Thus, in common life, to impute good or bad motives to a man, is to ascribe such motives to him. Here the first idea alone is retained. But when Shimei prayed David, "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me," he prayed that the king would not lay his sin to his charge, and punish him for it. Here the second predominates. Hence, not to impute is to remit. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity;" that is, blessed is the man whose iniquity is pardoned. To impute sin, therefore, "is to lay it to the charge of any, and to deal with them according to its desert."—*Owen*. If the thing imputed be antecedently ours, then there is merely a recognizing it as such, and treating us accordingly. If it be not ours, there is necessarily an ascription of it to us on some ground or other, and a determination to deal with us according to the merit of the thing imputed. When Paul begged Philemon to impute to him the debt or offence of Onesimus, he begged him to regard him as the debtor or offender, and exact of him whatever compensation he required. When our sins are said to be imputed to Christ, it is meant that he is treated as a sinner on account of our sins. And when Adam's sin is said to be imputed to his posterity, it is intended that his sin is laid to their charge and they are punished for it, or are treated as sinners on that account. In all such cases there must be some ground for this imputation; that is, for this laying the conduct of one to the charge of another, and dealing with him accordingly. In the case of Paul it was the voluntary assumption of the responsibility of Onesimus; so it was in the case of Christ. The ground of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, is the union between them, which is two-fold; a natural union, as between a father and his children, and the union of representation, which is the main idea here insisted upon. A relation admitted on all hands. The Spectator affirms it when he says "that Adam was not on trial for himself alone," but for his posterity also, as is clearly implied in the sentence.

What we deny, therefore, is, first, that this doctrine involves any mysterious union with Adam, any confusion of our identity with his, so that his act was personally and properly our act; and secondly, that the moral turpitude of that sin was transferred from him to us; we deny the possibility of any such transfer. These are the two ideas which the Spectator and others consider as necessarily involved in the doctrine of imputation, and for rejecting which, they represent us as having abandoned the old doctrine on



the subject. We proceed now to show that they are mistaken on this point.

In proof of this, we would remark in the first place, on a fact that has always struck us as rather singular, which is, that while those who hold the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, do, at the same time, hold the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of Christ's righteousness to us, we seldom or never hear (from Calvinists at least), the same objections to the idea of imputation in the two latter cases as in the first. Is there any one who has the hardihood to charge the whole Calvinistic world (who taught or preach the doctrine of imputation) with believing, that Christ personally and properly committed the sins which are said to be imputed to him? or that the moral turpitude of these sins was transferred to him? Now, we ask, why is this? Why, if the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity supposes that they were the personal actors of his transgression, the imputation of our sins to Christ does not make him the agent of our acts? Why, since at every turn we are asked if we have ever repented of Adam's sin, is it not demanded of us if Christ ever repented of our sins? We have never been so unhappy as to have our hearts torn by being told that we believe and teach that the blessed Saviour was morally a sinner; that our "moral character" was transferred to him. If this is imputation, if this "transfer of moral character" is included in it, we have not words to express our deep abhorrence of the doctrine. We would hold no communion with the man who taught it. And if this is what our brethren mean to charge us with, then is the golden cord of charity for ever broken; for what fellowship can there be between parties, where one accuses the other of blasphemy? We do not harbour the idea, however, that our brethren can seriously make such a charge. Nor can they imagine, that when we speak of the imputed righteousness of Christ, we are so insane as to mean that we personally performed the acts of his perfect obedience, and in person died upon the cross. Neither can they suppose that we mean to assert that his moral excellence was transferred to us.\* They never ask us whether we feel self-approbation and complacency for what Christ did; why then ask us if we feel *remorse* and self-reproach for what Adam did? We say then, that the fact, that Calvinists speak in the same terms of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us that they use of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, and illustrate the one by the other, is an *à priori* argument, we should hope, of conclusive force to prove that they do not consider either the idea of personal identification, or the transfer of moral character, as included in the doctrine of imputation.

There is another presumptive argument as to this point, drawn

\* We know there have been some pitiable instances in which such ideas have been advanced by certain Antinomians; but we are not speaking of the *ἐκτρώματα* of the human head and heart, but of a common doctrine of a large and pious portion of the Christian world.

from the common technicalities of theology. What is meant by calling Adam a public person, a representative, a federal head, as is so constantly done by those who teach the doctrine of imputation? Are not these terms intended to express the nature of the union between Adam and his posterity? A union of representation is not a union of identity. If Adam and his race were one and the same, he was not their representative, for a thing cannot represent itself. The two ideas are inconsistent. Where the one is asserted, the other is denied. They therefore who affirm that we sinned in Adam as a representative, do thereby deny that we sinned in him personally. When our formularies say that Adam was "a public person," or representative, and that we "sinned in him," it is to make them affirm and deny the same thing in the same breath, to quote them as teaching that we were personally one with him and personally acted in him. With the same propriety it might be asserted that Alexander of Russia personally signed the treaty with the Turks, because he did it in his minister.

The same terms are used in reference to Christ, who is called the head, representative and substitute of his people, and they all express the nature of the relation which is the ground of imputation, and are absolutely inconsistent with the idea of personal identity and consequent transfer of moral character. When the Spectator, therefore, congratulates us on having rejected a philosophy which confounds all notions of personal identity, he does so under a wrong impression. The fact is, there is no philosophy about it. We do not mean to say that no man has ever philosophized on this subject, or that there have not been men who taught a mysterious union of the race with Adam. What we mean to deny is, that such speculations enter at all into the essence of the doctrine of imputation, or are necessary to it. In every doctrine there are certain ideas which constitute its formal nature, and make it what it is; so that if they are rejected, the doctrine is rejected. It would be the most unreasonable thing in the world, to require of a man who undertakes to defend any doctrine, to make good all the explanations of it which have ever been given, and to justify all the modes of expression ever employed respecting it. What a task would this impose on the advocate of the doctrine of the Trinity, of the deity of Christ, or of any other doctrine. This is a task which we would never undertake, and have not now undertaken. Our business is to make it appear that the notions of personal oneness, community in action, transfer of moral character, are no part of the doctrine of imputation; not that none of the schoolmen or scholastic divines ever held any of these ideas. For what have they not held? We know that it is often asserted that Augustine and his followers held the personal unity of Adam and his race. Döderlein, Knapp, and Bretschneider all assert it, and assert it one after the other, on the same grounds. But we would remark in the first place, that we are not prepared to believe this; first, because the passages which these writers produce in proof of their assertion do not make

it out. The same forms of expression occur in the Bible, and in the writings of men who expressly reject this idea, and even the doctrine of imputation itself. Dr. Hopkins uses as strong language on the connection of Adam and his posterity, as we have ever seen quoted from Augustine. And secondly, because there are modes of expression adopted by Augustine on this subject, in explanation of the ground of imputation, inconsistent with this idea. Turretin quotes and explains Augustine thus: "*Quicumque*, inquit August., ep. 106, *ex illo multi in seipsis futuri erunt, in illo uno, unus homo erant*, unitate non specifica, vel numerica, sed partim unitate originis, quia omnes ex uno sunt sanguine, partim unitate representationis, quia unus omnium personam representabat ex ordine Dei."—Tom. i., p. 679. According to this, Augustine taught that we were one in Adam, because he was our common father and common representative, in which there is no mysticism. Let it be admitted, however, that Augustine did give this explanation of the ground of imputation. Do we reject the doctrine because we reject the reason which he gives to justify and explain it? It might with as much propriety be said that every man rejects the doctrine of the Trinity, who does not adopt every tittle of Athanasius's exposition of it. It is therefore no special concern of ours, what Augustine held on this point. What we affirm is, that this idea is not essential to the doctrine, and is not embraced by the great body of its defenders. Any man who holds that there is such an ascription of the sin of Adam to his posterity, as to be the ground of their bearing the punishment of that sin, holds the doctrine of imputation; whether he undertakes to justify this imputation merely on the ground that we are the children of Adam, or on the principle of representation, or of scientia media; or whether he chooses to philosophize on the nature of unity until he confounds all notions of personal identity, as President Edwards appears to have done.

As it is in vain to make quotations before we have fixed the meaning of the terms which are constantly recurring in them, we must notice the allegation of the Spectator, as to our incorrect use of certain words, before we proceed to bring any more direct testimony to the fact, that the views which we have given of the doctrine of imputation are those commonly entertained among Calvinists on the subject. The words *guilt* and *punishment* are those particularly referred to. The former we had defined to be, liability, or exposedness to punishment. We did not mean to say that the word never included the idea of moral turpitude or criminality. We were speaking of its theological usage. It is very possible that a word may have one sense in common life, and another, somewhat modified, in particular sciences. A legal or theological sense of a term may, hence, often be distinguished from its ordinary acceptation. It is, therefore, not much to the purpose, when the question relates to the correct theological use of a word, to quote Dr. Webster's Dictionary as an authority on the subject. We must appeal to usage. Grotius, who, we presume, will be regarded as



a competent witness, in his treatise *De Satisfactione Christi*, uses the word constantly in the sense which we have given it. Thus in the phrase, “De auferendo reatu per remissionis impetrationem apud Deum.”—*Opera Theol.*, vol. iii., p. 333, On p. 336, “Sanguis pecudum tollebat reatum temporalem, non autem reatum spirituale.”

A little after, “Hinc καθαρίζειν est eum reatum tollere, sive efficere remissionem.” In all these cases guilt is that which is removed by pardon, i. e., exposure to punishment. Turretin, “Reatus theologice dicitur obligatio ad poenam ex peccato.”—Tom. i., p. 654. Owen, “Guilt in scripture is the respect of sin unto the sanction of the law, whereby the sinner becomes obnoxious unto punishment.”—*On Justification*, p. 280. On the same page; in sin there is, “Its formal nature, as it is a transgression of the law; and the stain or the filth that it brings upon the soul; but the guilt of it is nothing but its respect unto punishment from the sanction of the law.” Again, “He (Christ) was alienae culpa reus. Perfectly innocent in himself; but took our guilt upon him, or our obnoxiousness unto punishment for sin.” Edwards says, “From this it will follow, that guilt, or exposedness to punishment, &c.”—Vol. ii., p. 543. Ridgeley, vol. ii., p. 119, “Guilt is an obligation or liableness to suffer punishment for sin committed.” If there is anything fixed in theological language, it is this sense of the word guilt. And if there is anything in which Calvinists are agreed, it is in saying that when they affirm “that the guilt of Adam’s sin has come upon us,” they mean, exposure to punishment on account of that sin. It would be easy to multiply quotations, but enough has been produced to convince the Spectator that our sense of the word is not so “peculiar” as he imagined.

“The word punishment, too,” he says, “has a peculiar sense in the vocabulary of the historian.”—P. 344. Here again he appeals to Dr. Webster, and here again we must dissent; not so much from the doctor’s definition, as from the Spectator’s exposition of it. The Dr. says that punishment is “any pain or suffering inflicted on a person for a crime or offence.” To this we have no special objection. But that the crime or offence must necessarily belong personally to the individual punished, as the Spectator seems to take for granted, we are very far from admitting; for this is the very turning point in the whole discussion respecting imputation. Punishment, according to our views, is any evil inflicted on a person, in the execution of a judicial sentence, on account of sin. That the word is used in this sense, for evils thus inflicted on one person for the offence of another, cannot be denied. It would be easy to fill a volume with examples of this usage, from writers ancient and modern, sacred and profane. We quote a few instances from theologians, as this is a theological discussion. Grotius (p. 313), in answering the objection of Socinus, that it is unjust that our sins should be punished in Christ, says, “Sed ut omnis hic error dematur, notandum est, esse quidem essentielle poenae, ut infligatur ob peccatum, sed non item essentielle ei esse, ut infligatur ipsi

qui peccavit." On the same page, "Puniri alios ob aliorum delicta non audet negare Socinus." If he uses the word once, he does, we presume, a hundred times in this sense in this single treatise. Owen says, "there can be no punishment but with respect to the guilt of sin personally committed or imputed."—P. 287. Storr and other modern and moderate theologians, use the word in this sense perpetually. Storr says, "Jedes durch einen richterlichen Ausspruch um der Sünden willen verhängte Leiden, Strafe heisst," that is, "Every evil judicially inflicted on account of sin, is punishment."—*Zweck des Todes Jesu*, p. 585. No one has ever denied that in its most strict and rigid application, punishment has reference to personal guilt; but this does not alter the case, for usage, the only law in such matters, has sanctioned its application in the manner in which we have used it, and that too among the most accurate of theological writers.

Having fixed the sense in which these terms are used by the writers to whom we shall refer, we will now proceed to establish our position, that the doctrine of imputation, as taught by standard Calvinistic authors, does not involve, either the idea of a personal oneness with Adam, so that his act is strictly and properly our act, or that of the transfer of moral character.

Our first testimony is from Knapp, whom we quote, not as a Calvinist, but as a historian. In his *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, section 76, he says, "However various the opinions of theologians are respecting imputation, when they come to explain themselves distinctly on the subject, yet the majority agree in general as to this point, that the expression, God imputes the sin of our first parents to their descendants, amounts to this, God punishes the descendants on account of the sin of their first parents." This testimony is no otherwise valuable than as the opinion of an impartial man, as to the substance of the doctrine. That there are various views, explanations, and modes of defending this doctrine, no one ever dreamed of denying, and it would stand alone, in this respect, if there were not.

Turretin (*Quaest.* ix., p. 678) thus explains his views of this subject. "Imputation is either of something foreign to us, or properly ours. Sometimes that is imputed to us which is personally ours, in which sense God imputes to sinners their transgressions, whom he punishes for crimes properly their own; and in reference to what is good, the zeal of Phineas is said to be imputed to him for righteousness.—Ps. cvi. 31. Sometimes that is imputed which is without us, and not performed by ourselves; thus the righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, and our sins are imputed to him, although he has neither sin in himself nor we righteousness. Here we speak of the latter kind of imputation, not of the former, because we are treating of a sin committed by Adam, not by us." (*Quia agitur de peccato ab Adamo commissio, non a nobis.*) We have here precisely the two ideas excluded from the doctrine which we have rejected, and which the Spectator seems

to think essential to it. For Turretin says, that in this case the thing imputed is something without us (*extra nos, nec a nobis prae-stitum*), and secondly, the moral turpitude of the act is not transferred, for it is analogous, he tells us, to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, and our sins to him, *licet nec ipse peccatum in se habeat. nec nos justitiam*. That there must be some ground for this imputation is self-evident, and this can only be some relation or union in which the parties stand to each other. This union, however, according to Turretin, is nothing mysterious, nothing which involves a confusion of identity. The union which is to serve as the ground of imputation, he says, may be threefold: "1. Natural, as between a father and his children; 2. Moral and political, as between a king and his subjects; 3. Voluntary, as among friends, and between the guilty and his substitute." The bond between Adam and his posterity is twofold: "1. Natural, as he is the father, and we are his children. 2. Political and forensic, as he was the prince and representative head of the whole human race. The foundation, therefore, of imputation is not only the natural connection which exists between us and Adam, since, in that case, all his sins might be imputed to us, but mainly the moral and federal, in virtue of which God entered into covenant with him as our head."

All the arguments which Turretin urges in support of his doctrine, prove that he viewed the subject as we have represented it. He appeals, in the first instance, to Rom. v. 12—21. The scope of the passage he takes to be, the illustration of the method of justification, by comparing it to the manner in which men were brought under condemnation. As Adam was made the head of the whole race, so that the guilt of his sin comes on all to condemnation, so Christ is made the head of his people, and his obedience comes on all of them to justification. On page 681, he says, "We are constituted sinners in Adam in the same way (*eadem ratione*) in which we are constituted righteous in Christ; but in Christ we are constituted righteous by the imputation of righteousness. Therefore we are made sinners in Adam by the imputation of his sin, otherwise the comparison is destroyed." Another of his arguments is derived from the native depravity of men, which he says is a great evil, and cannot be reconciled with the divine character, unless we suppose that men are born in this state of corruption as a punishment. As this evil has the nature of punishment, it necessarily supposes some antecedent sin, on account of which it is inflicted, for there is no punishment but on account of sin. "It cannot, however, be a sin properly and personally ours, because we were not yet in existence. Therefore it is the sin of Adam imputed to us." *Non potest autem esse peccatum nostrum proprium et personale, quia nondum fuimus actu*. Almost the very form of expression quoted from us by the Spectator to prove that we have abandoned the old doctrine of imputation.

In order to evince his sense of the importance of the doctrine, he



remarks on its connection with that of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, and says that all the objections urged against the one, bear against the other ; so that if the one be rejected, the other cannot stand. We shall give in his own words a passage from page 689, which appears to us very decisive as to the point in hand. “*Voluntas ergo Adami potest dici singularis actus proprietate, universalis repræsentationis jure, singularis quia ab uno ex individuis humanis profecta est, universalis quia individuum illud universum genus humanum repræsentabat. Sic justitia Christi est actus unius, et bene tamen dicitur omnium fidelium per divinam imputationem ; ut quod unus fecit, omnes censeantur fecisse, si unus mortuus est, omnes sunt mortui.*”—2 Cor. v. 15. Is it possible to assert in clearer language, that the act of Adam was personally his own and only his, and that it is only on the principle of representation that it can be said to be ours?

These quotations from Turretin we think abundantly sufficient to establish our assertion, that the doctrine under consideration neither involves any confusion of personal identity, nor any transfer of the moral turpitude of Adam's sin to his posterity. As Turretin is universally regarded as having adhered strictly to the common Calvinistic system, and on the mere question of fact as to what that system is, is second to no man in authority, we might here rest our cause. But we deem this a matter of much practical importance, and worthy of being clearly established. Misconceptions on this subject have been, and still are, the means of alienating brethren. They are the ground of many hard thoughts, and of much disrespectful language. It is not easy to feel cordially united to men whom we consider as teaching mischievous absurdities ; nor is it, on the other hand, adapted to call forth brotherly love to have oneself held up to the public as inculcating opinions which shock every principle of common sense, and contradict the plainest moral judgments of men. We hope, therefore, to be heard patiently, while we attempt still further to prove that our doctrine is such as has been so often stated.

We refer in the next place to the testimony of Tuckney, not only because he was a man of great accuracy and learning, but also because he stands in an intimate relation to our church. He was a member of the Westminster assembly of divines, and of the committee which drafted our confession of faith.\* He is said also to have drawn up a large portion of the larger catechism. He is, therefore, a peculiarly competent witness as to the sense in which our formularies mean to teach the doctrine of imputation. In his *Praelectiones Theologicae*, read, as royal professor, in the university of Cambridge, and published in 1679, there is a long and learned discourse on the imputation of Christ's righteousness. In the explanation and defence of this doctrine, he enters into an accurate

\* Reid's *Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of the Divines of the Westminster Assembly*, vol ii., p. 187.

investigation of the whole subject of imputation. This discourse abounds in the minute scholastic distinctions of the day, which it is not necessary for our purpose to detail. It will be sufficient to show that his view of the subject is the same as that which we have presented. In reference to the two passages, 2 Cor. v. 21, and Rom. v. 18, he says, "We have a most beautiful twofold analogy. We are made *the righteousness of God* in Christ in the same way that he *was made sin* for us. That is, by imputation. This analogy the former passage exhibits. But the other (Rom. v. 18) presents one equally beautiful. We are accounted righteous through Christ in the same manner that we are accounted guilty through Adam. The latter is by imputation, therefore also the former."—P. 234. The same idea is repeatedly and variously presented. As, therefore, he so clearly states, that in all these cases imputation is of the same nature, if we can show (if indeed it needs showing) that he does not teach that our sins are so imputed to Christ as to make him morally a sinner, or his righteousness to us as to make us morally righteous, we shall have proved that he does not teach such an imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity as involves a transfer of its moral character. The cardinal Bellarmin, it seems, in arguing against the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, urged the same objection which we are now considering, maintaining that if Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, then are we really inherently righteous in the sight of God. To this Tuckney replies, "Who of us has ever been so much beside himself as to pretend that he was inherently righteous, in the sense of Bellarmin, so that he should think himself pure and immaculate?"—P. 226. The same sentiment is still more strongly expressed on page 220. "We are not so foolish or blasphemous as to say, or even think, that the imputed righteousness of Christ renders us formally and subjectively righteous." And adds, we might as well be made wise and just with the wisdom and integrity of another. "The righteousness of Christ belongs properly to himself, and is as inseparable and incommunicable as any other attribute of a thing, or its essence itself." Bellarmin, however, as so often happens in controversies of this nature, admits the very thing he is contending against. Tuckney quotes him as confessing, "Christum nobis justitiam factum quoniam satisfecit Patri pro nobis, et eam satisfactionem ita nobis donat et communicat cum nos justificat, ut nostra satisfactio et justitia dici possit, atque hoc modo non esse absurdum si quis diceret nobis imputari Christi justitiam et merita cum nobis donentur et applicentur ac si nos ipsi Deo satisfecissemus." On which our author remarks, that neither Luther nor Calvin could more appropriately describe justification by imputed righteousness.

To the other objection of Bellarmin (which proceeds upon the same erroneous supposition, that imputation conveys the moral character of the thing imputed), that Christ must be regarded as morally a sinner, if our sins were imputed to him, Tuckney replies,

“Although we truly say that our sins are imputed to Christ, yet who of us was ever so BLASPHEMOUS as to say, that they were so imputed as if he had actually committed them, or that he was inherently and properly a sinner, as to the stain and pollution of sin.” Bellarmin admitted that our sins were imputed to Christ, quoad debitum satisfaciendi, and his righteousness to us, quoad satisfactionem, and the Protestants replied, this was all they contended for.

We do not know how it could be more pointedly or variously denied, that the transfer of moral character is included in this doctrine. The testimony of Tuckney is the more valuable, as he not only clearly expresses his own opinion, but utterly denies that any of his fellow Calvinists ever understood or taught the doctrine in this manner.

The same views are presented by Owen, who carried matters as far as most Calvinists are wont to do. In his work on justification, this subject naturally presents itself, and is discussed at length. A few quotations will suffice for our purpose. The imputation of that unto us which is not antecedently our own, he says, may be various. “Only it must be observed, that no imputation of this kind is to account them unto whom anything is imputed, *to have done the things themselves that are imputed to them*. That were not to impute, but to err in judgment, and indeed to overthrow the whole nature of gracious imputation. But it is to make that to be ours by imputation which was not ours before, unto all the ends and purposes whereunto it would have served if it had been our own without any such imputation. It is therefore a manifest mistake of their own, which some make the ground of a charge on the doctrine of imputation. For they say, if our sins were imputed unto Christ, then must he be esteemed to have done what we have done amiss, and so be the greatest sinner that ever was: and on the other side, if his righteousness be imputed unto us, then are we esteemed to have done what he did, and so stand in no need of pardon. *But this is contrary unto the nature of imputation*, which proceeds on no such judgment, but, on the contrary, that we ourselves have done nothing of what is imputed unto us; nor Christ anything of what was imputed unto him.”—P. 236.

Again, on the same page, “Things that are not our own originally, personally, inherently, may yet be imputed unto us, *ex justitia*, by the rule of righteousness. And this may be done upon a double relation unto those whose they are, 1, federal; 2, natural. Things done by one may be imputed unto others, propter relationem foederalem, because of a covenant relation between them. So the sin of Adam was, and is imputed unto all his posterity, as we shall afterwards more fully declare. And the ground hereof is, that we stood in the same covenant with him, who was our head and representative.”

Here then it is asserted that the sin of Adam is not ours, “originally, personally, inherently,” and that the ground of imputation



is not a mystic oneness of person, but the relation of representation.

On page 242 he says, "This imputation (of Christ's righteousness) is not the transmission or transfusion of the righteousness of another into them that are to be justified, that they should become perfectly and inherently righteous thereby. For it is impossible that the righteousness of one should be transfused into another, to become his subjectively and inherently." Neither is it possible, according to Owen, that the unrighteousness of one should be transfused into another. For these two cases are analogous, as he over and over asserts; thus, p. 307, "As we are made guilty by Adam's actual sin, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us; so are we made righteous by the righteousness of Christ which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us." On page 468 he says, "Nothing is intended by the imputation of sin unto any, but the rendering them justly obnoxious unto the punishment due unto that sin. As the not imputing of sin is the freeing of men from being subject or liable unto punishment."

It would be easy to multiply quotations to almost any extent on this subject, from the highest authorities, but we hope that enough has been said to convince our readers that the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin includes neither the idea of any mysterious union of the human race with him, so that his sin is strictly and properly theirs, nor that of a transfer of moral character. This we are persuaded is the common Calvinistic doctrine.

It is proper to state, however, that there is another theory on this subject. About the middle of the seventeenth century, Placæus, professor in the French Protestant school at Saumur, rejected the doctrine of imputation, and taught that original sin consisted solely in the inherent native depravity of men. In consequence of his writings, a national synod was called in 1644-5, in which this doctrine was condemned. The decree of the synod, as given by Turretin and De Moor, is in these words; "*Cum relatum esset ad synodum, scripta quaedam alia typis evulgata, alia manu exarata prodiisse, quae totam rationem peccati originalis sola corruptione hæreditaria, in omnibus hominibus inhaerente definiunt, et primi peccati Adami imputationem negant: Damnavit Synodus doctrinam ejusmodi, quatenus peccati originalis naturam ad corruptionem hæreditariam posterorum Adæ ita restringit, ut imputationem excludat primi illius peccati, quo lapsus est Adam: Adeoque censuris omnibus ecclesiasticis subjiciendos censuit, Pastores, Professores, et quosunque alios, qui in hujus quæstionis disceptatione a communi sententia recesserint ecclesiarum Protestantium, quae omnes hactenus et corruptionem illam, et imputationem hanc in omnes Adami posteros descendentem agnoverunt, &c.*"—Tur., p. 677.

In order to evade the force of this decision, Placæus proposed the distinction between mediate and immediate imputation. According to the latter (which is the common view), the sin of Adam is imputed to all his posterity, as the ground of punishment antecedently to inherent corruption, which in fact results from the penal

withholding of divine influences; but according to the former, the imputation is subsequent to the view of inherent depravity, and is founded upon it as the ground of our being associated with Adam in his punishment. This distinction, which Turretin says was excogitated ad fucum faciendum, merely retains the name, while the doctrine of imputation is really rejected. "For if the sin of Adam is only said to be imputed to us mediately, because we are rendered guilty in the sight of God, and obnoxious to punishment on account of the inherent corruption which we derive from Adam, there is properly no imputation of Adam's sin, but only of inherent corruption."—P. 677.

Our readers may find a long account of the controversy which arose on this question in De Moor's Commentary on Mark's Compend, vol. iii., p. 262, et seq. One of the most interesting works which appeared at this time, was the tract by the celebrated Rivet, intended to prove that all the Protestant churches and leading divines held the doctrine of imputation as it was presented by the national synod of France, in opposition to Placæus. In a commendation of this work, the professors of theology at Leyden express their grief, that among other doctrines recently agitated in France, that of the imputation of Adam's sin had been called in question, "*Cum tamen eo negato, nec justa esse possit originalis naturæ humanæ corruptio, et facilis inde via sit ad negationem imputationis justitiæ secundi Adami.*" While they rejoiced in the unanimous decision of the French synod, they deeply regretted that any should disregard it, and endeavour to disseminate a doctrine "*contrarium communi omnium ferme Christianorum consensui, solis Pelagii et Socini discipulis exceptis.*" They recommend strongly the work of their colleague, Rivet, who, they say, had endeavoured, "*Synodi nationalis decretum tueri, dogma vere Catholicum stabilire, bene sentientes in veritate confirmare, aberrantes in viam reducere auctoritatibus gravibus, et universali totius orbis Christianorum consensu.*"—*Opera Riveti*, tom. iii., p. 223, or *De Moor*, tom. iii., p. 274.

Instead of writing an article, we should be obliged to write a volume, if we were to take up and fully discuss all the subjects, relevant and irrelevant, presented in the Protestant's inquiries. We have followed our own judgment in the selection of topics, and touched on those points which we thought most likely to be interesting and useful. We feel, therefore, perfectly authorized to dismiss, at least for the present, the history of this doctrine. Turretin, the French synod, the professors of Leyden, the Augsburg Confession, assert as strongly as we have done, its general prevalence among orthodox Christians. The second article of the Augsburg Confession runs thus; "*Item docent, quod post lapsum Adæ, omnes homines naturali modo propagati nascentes habeant peccatum originis. Intelligimus autem peccatum originis, quod sic vocant Sancti Patres, et omnes orthodoxi et piè eruditi in Ecclesia, videlicet reatum, quo nascentes propter Adæ lapsum rei sunt iræ*

Dei et mortis aeternae, et ipsam corruptionem humanae naturae propagatam ab Adamo." These quotations will at least satisfy our readers that we have not been more rash in our assertions than many others before us, and is as much, we think, as the Protestant's inquiry on this point calls for. Our principal concern is with the editors of the Spectator, who have presented the most interesting subject of investigation. We revert, therefore, to their statement, that Edwards, Stapfer, and "other standard writers on the subject," taught the doctrine of imputation differently from what we have done. That this is not correct, as relates to the great body of the Reformed Theologians, we have, we think, sufficiently proved. How the case stands with Edwards and Stapfer we shall now proceed to inquire.

As Edwards appears to have borrowed, in some measure, his views on this subject from Stapfer, we shall begin with the latter. We must, in the outset, dissent from the remark of the Spectator, that Stapfer is to be regarded as a "standard writer" on the doctrine of imputation. So far from it, the synod of Berne refused to sanction his views on the subject, as inconsistent with the doctrines of the reformed churches.\* And in his work, as now printed, he apologizes for his statements on this point, and endeavours to make it appear that they do not involve a departure from the common doctrine (Theol. Pol., vol. iv., p. 562), with how much success the reader may judge. On page 156, in answer to the common objection that imputation is inconsistent with justice, he says, in substance, no one could accuse God of injustice, if in virtue of a divine constitution, had Adam remained holy, his posterity had been holy also; and therefore no one should complain, if in virtue of the same constitution, they are born in the image of their unholy progenitor. He then says expressly, this is the whole amount of imputation, "*Peccati autem primi imputatio in nulla alia re consistit quam quod posterius ejus et eodem loco habentur et similes sunt parenti.*" And plainer still a little afterwards, "*dum Adamo similem dare sobolem, et peccatum ejus imputare unum idemque.*" This, as we understand it, is precisely Dr. Hopkins's doctrine; that in virtue of a divine constitution the posterity of Adam were to have the same moral character that he had. This too is the Spectator's doctrine; he says, "That Adam was not on trial for himself alone, but by a divine constitution, all his descendants were to have in their natural state, the same character and state with their progenitor."—P. 348. And yet these brethren denounce in no very measured terms the old doctrine of imputation. It is rather singular, therefore, that they should quote Stapfer as a "standard writer" on that doctrine, who asserts their own view nearly totidem verbis. As to the passage which the Spectator produces to prove that he held the old

\* This statement is made confidently, although from memory. In the first copy of his work which fell into our hands this fact is stated, and our impression of its correctness is confirmed by the nature of his opinions as now presented, and his apology for them.



doctrine as they understand it (that is, as including personal union and transfer of character), it amounts to very little. The passage is this: "God in imputing this sin (Adam's) *finds* this whole moral person (the human race) *ALREADY* a sinner, and *not* merely constitutes it such." He says, indeed, that Adam and his race form one moral person, and so would Turretin and Tuckney, and so would we, and yet one and all deny that there was any personal union. The very epithet *moral*, shows that no such idea is intended. When lawyers call a corporation of a hundred men a legal person, we do not hear that philosophy is called in to explain how this can be. And there is no need of her aid to explain how Adam and his race are one, in the sense of common Calvinists. But he says, God finds "this whole moral person *ALREADY* a sinner!" yes, he denies antecedent and immediate imputation, and teaches that it is from the view and on the ground of inherent hereditary depravity imputation takes place. This is mediate imputation, "*quae hæreditariæ corruptionis in nos ab Adamo derivatæ intuitum consequitur, eaque mediante fit;*" and which Turretin says is no imputation at all, "*nomen imputationis retinendo, rem ipsam de facto tollit.*" Though we do not believe that Stapfer held either of the ideas which the Spectator attributes to him, identity or transfer, it is of little account to us what his views on those points were, as we think it clear that he rejected the doctrine of imputation, as held by the Reformed generally. He appeals indeed to Vitranga and Lampe to bear out his statements. How it was with the former we do not pretend to say, but as to Lampe, the very passage which Stapfer quotes contradicts his theory. Lampe says, "*Gott hätte die Nachkommen Adams nicht in Sünden lassen geböhren werden, wenn seine Schuld nicht auf seine Nachkommen wäre übergegangen;*" i. e., "God would not have permitted the descendants of Adam to be born in sin, if his guilt had not come upon them." Here the guilt of Adam (exposure to punishment on account of his sin) is represented as antecedent to corruption and assumed to justify it, and not consequent on the view of it. This is the old doctrine. That this is the fact, is plain from the quotations which we have already made. "Imputation being denied," say the Leyden divines, "inherent corruption cannot be just." So Turretin and Calvinists generally argue; of course imputation is antecedent to corruption. The Spectator must have seen that Stapfer's statement was inconsistent with the old doctrine, had he recollected how often it is objected to that doctrine, "that sin cannot be the punishment of sin."\*

We are inclined to think that president Edwards agreed with Stapfer in his views of this subject; because he quotes from him with approbation the very passage which we have just produced; and because his own statements amount to very much the same

\* We do not teach, however, "that sin is the punishment of sin." The punishment we suffer for Adam's sin is abandonment on the part of God, the withholding of divine influences; corruption is consequent on this abandonment.

thing. In vol. ii., p. 544, he says, "The first being of an evil disposition in a child of Adam, whereby he is disposed to approve the sin of his first father, so far as to imply a full and perfect consent of heart to it, I think, is not to be looked upon as a consequence of the imputation of that first sin, any more than the full consent of Adam's own heart in the act of sinning; which was not consequent on the imputation, but rather prior to it in the order of nature. Indeed the derivation of the evil disposition to Adam's posterity, or rather, the co-existence of the evil disposition implied in Adam's first rebellion, in the root and branches, is a consequence of the union that the wise Author of the world has established between Adam and his posterity; but not properly a consequence of the imputation of his sin; nay, it is rather antecedent to it, as it was in Adam himself. The first depravity of heart, and the imputation of that sin, are both the consequence of that established union; but yet in such order, that the evil disposition is first, and the charge of guilt consequent, as it was in the case of Adam himself." We think that Edwards here clearly asserts the doctrine of mediate imputation; that is, that the charge of the guilt of Adam's sin is consequent on depravity of heart. According to the common doctrine, however, imputation is antecedent to this depravity, and is assumed to account for it, that is, to reconcile its existence with God's justice. The doctrine of Edwards is precisely that which was so formally rejected when presented by Placæus. Turretin in the very statement of the question says, "It is not inquired whether the sin of Adam may be said to be imputed to us, because, on account of original sin inherent in us (depravity of heart), we deserve to be viewed as in the same place with him, as though we had actually committed his sin," p. 678, "but the question is, whether his sin is imputed to his posterity, with an imputation, not mediate and consequent, but immediate and antecedent." It is of the latter he says, "*nos cum orthodoxis affirmamus.*" The imputation consequent on depravity of heart is precisely that which the old Calvinists declared was no imputation at all of Adam's sin, and which they almost with one voice rejected. It is on the ground of this theory that Edwards says, as Stapfer had done, that "the sin of the apostasy is not theirs (mankind's) merely because God imputes it to them; but it is truly and properly theirs, and on that ground God imputes it to them." P. 559. That is, imputation, instead of being antecedent, is consequent, and founded on the view of inherent depravity. When the Spectator, therefore, quotes this sentence as contradicting our statement, we readily admit the fact. It not only contradicts us, however, but is, as we have shown, utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of imputation as taught in the Reformed churches. To say, either that the sin of Adam is imputed to us, because it is inherent in us (or is truly and properly ours), or that it becomes thus inherent, or thus ours, by being imputed, is, as Owen, Turretin, Rivet and others over and over affirm, to overthrow the whole nature of imputation. It might with as much justice be asserted, that the

righteousness of Christ is first inherently and subjectively ours, and on that ground is imputed to us : or that our sins were subjectively the sins of Christ, and on that ground were imputed to him. Turretin, in so many words, asserts the very reverse of what Edwards maintains. The latter says, "the sin is truly and properly ours;" the former, "*non potest esse peccatum nostrum proprium et personale.*"

The fact is, that Edwards's whole discourse on this subject was intended more to vindicate the doctrine of native depravity than that of imputation. It is for this purpose that he enters into his long and ingenious, though unsatisfactory argument on the nature of unity, and the divinely constituted oneness of Adam and his race. He hoped, in this way, the more readily to account for the existence of moral corruption, and this he makes the ground of imputation. We are surely, therefore, not to be burdened with the defence of Edwards's theory on this subject, which, we think, we have abundantly shown is not the doctrine commonly received among Calvinists, but utterly inconsistent with it. As he had rejected all of imputation but the name, it is no matter of surprise that his followers soon discarded the term itself, and contented themselves with expressing the substance of his doctrine in much fewer words, viz. that God, agreeably to a general constitution, determined that Adam's posterity should be like himself; born in his moral image, whether that was good or bad. This is Stapfer's doctrine, almost in so many words; and Edwards quotes and adopts his language.

We are bound in candour, however, to state that we are not able to reconcile the view here given of Edwards's doctrine, with several passages which occur in his work on Original Sin. Thus, in p. 540, he says, "I desire it may be noted, that I do not suppose the natural depravity of the posterity of Adam is owing to the course of nature only : it is also owing to the just judgment of God." And in the same paragraph, "God, in righteous judgment, continued to absent himself from Adam after he became a rebel; and withheld from him now those influences of the Holy Spirit which he before had. And just thus I suppose it to be with every natural branch of mankind : all are looked upon as sinning in and with their common root; and God righteously withholds special influences and spiritual communications from all, for this sin." But how is this? If these special influences are withheld "for this sin," and as a "righteous judgment," then assuredly the sin for which this righteous judgment is inflicted, must be considered as already theirs, and not first imputed after the existence of the depravity resulting from these influences being withheld. According to Edwards, depravity results from withholding special divine influences, and according to this passage, the withholding these influences is a just judgment for Adam's sin; then of course this sin is punished before the depravity exists; but it cannot be punished before it is imputed; the imputation, therefore, according to this passage, is antecedent to the de-



pravity. But according to the other passage quoted above, the depravity is first and the imputation subsequent. We are unable to reconcile these two statements. The one teaches immediate and antecedent imputation, which is the old doctrine; the other mediate and consequent, which the old writers considered as a virtual denial of that doctrine. However this reconciliation is to be affected, we have said enough to show that neither Stapfer nor Edwards can be considered "standard writers on this subject," and that old Calvinists are under no obligations to defend their statements.

We hope our readers are now convinced that we have made good our position, that neither the personal identity of Adam and his posterity, community in act, nor transfer of moral character, form any part of the doctrine of imputation as taught by standard Calvinistic writers.

We have left ourselves very little room to notice the Protestant's difficulties. As they are almost all founded upon misapprehension, they are already answered by the mere statement of the doctrine. On p. 340 he has the following sentences: "The writer in question holds, that the sin of Adam was imputed to all his posterity, to their guilt, condemnation and ruin, without any act on their part." P. 90. Of course, then, from the moment they began to exist, that moment they were involved in this imputation. This he does not expressly affirm, by adopting, on p. 94, the statement of "ancient commentators," that David "contracted pollution in his conception." Here are two great mistakes. First, the writer does not discriminate between imputation and inherent depravity. He grounds his assertion, that we teach that all men are involved in the imputation of Adam's sin from the first moment of their existence, because we said that David was conceived in sin; as though these two things were one and the same. He should have remembered that Dr. Dwight, and a multitude of others, hold one of these doctrines and reject the other. The Spectator, who understands the subject better, says, that we teach that "native depravity is a punishment inflicted on us for the sin of Adam." We hardly teach, however, that the punishment is the thing punished. This confusion of the imputation of Adam's sin and inherent depravity runs through this writer's whole piece, and vitiates all his arguments. The second mistake here is, that imputation makes the thing imputed subjectively ours; which is a contradiction in terms, or as Owen says, is "to overthrow that which is affirmed." "To be *alienae culpae reus*, makes no man a sinner." The same mistake is the ground of his inquiry, how Paul could say of Jacob and Esau, before their birth, that they had done neither good nor evil, if the doctrine of imputation is correct? This doctrine does not affirm that they had done either good or evil. When it is affirmed that the sin of Adam is imputed to them, it is thereby said that they did not commit it, and that it is not subjectively theirs.

Most of the other difficulties of the Protestant are founded on the principle that "*a knowledge of law and duty is necessary, in order*

*that sin should exist.*" Supposing we should admit this, what has it to do with imputation? There have been men who adopted this principle and built their theology upon it, who still hold this doctrine. The whole difficulty results from the Protestant not discriminating between two very different things, the imputation of Adam's sin, and native depravity. All his queries founded on this principle, go to show that children cannot be morally depraved before they are moral agents, but have nothing to do with imputation. This is not the time or place to answer these inquiries, but we would ask in our turn, how Adam could be holy before he voluntarily obeyed the law, as the Protestant perhaps still holds, if a child may not be unholy before he voluntarily transgresses it?

The true question appears to have glimmered for a moment on the Protestant when he asked: "Is it a scripture doctrine that the guilt of others is imputed to men as their own?" What does this mean? Does he intend to ask whether the (moral) guilt of one man is ever transferred or transfused into others? We apprehend not. The question here must be tantamount to this: Is the sin of one man ever punished in another? for he asks, how is this imputation of guilt to be reconciled with Ezek. xviii. 20? "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son, &c." The Protestant will hardly maintain that the Israelites, to whose murmurs the prophet gave this reply, believed that the sins of their fathers were infused into them, their "moral character" transferred to them. Their complaint was; "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge," that is, our fathers sinned and we are punished for it. To be punished for the sin of another, then, is, according to the Protestant's doctrine, for this once at least, to have the guilt of that sin imputed. This is our doctrine too. Now, does the gentleman mean to ask whether it is a scripture doctrine that one man ever bears the iniquity of another? If he does, it is easily answered. God says of himself that he is a jealous God, "visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon their children," a solemn and often repeated declaration.—Ex. xx. 25, xxxiv. 37; Num. xiv. 18. Job says from his observation of divine providence, "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? God layeth up his iniquity for his children."—xx. 19. Jeremiah says, "Thou recompensest the iniquities of the fathers into the bosoms of their children after them."—xxxii. 18. Lament v. 7, he says, "Our fathers sinned and are not; and we have borne their iniquities." Surely the gentleman's question is answered in the only sense it can possibly bear in the connection in which it stands. If it be said that these expressions are to be taken in a general and popular sense, and not as affirming the doctrine of imputation; very well—then why quote them on the subject? The one form affirms precisely what the other, in a given case, denies. As to the question, how the assertion that one man ever bears the iniquities of another (i. e. the doctrine of imputation), is to be reconciled with Ezekiel, it is no special concern of

ours. That is, it is as much obligatory on the Protestant as on us, to say how two passages, one of which affirms and another denies the same thing, are to be brought into harmony. One thing however is certain, that Ezekiel cannot be so construed as to assert that no man ever has, nor ever shall bear the iniquity of another; for this would make him contradict positively what is more than once asserted in the word of God. The context, it is presumed, will show the meaning of the prophet, and the extent to which his declaration is to be carried. The Jews complained that they had been driven into exile, not for their own sins, but for those of their fathers. The prophet tells them they had no need to look further than to themselves, but should repent and turn unto God; and assures them that they should have no more any occasion to use that proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge;" but that the principle on which God would administer his government towards them would be, that every man should bear his own burden. Is anything more asserted in this passage than a general purpose of God as to his dealings with his people? And is there anything inconsistent in this general declaration, with those other passages in which one man is said, under peculiar circumstances, to bear the iniquity of another? And can such a passage, containing nothing more than a general principle, from which, even as it regards temporal affairs, there are many solemn departures recorded in the word of God, be brought up in contradiction to other solemn declarations, in which God declares he would act upon a different principle? This passage asserts nothing in opposition to any doctrine of ours. We admit, in its full force, that it is a general principle in the divine government, that every man shall bear his own burden; but we do not admit that because this is the case, there can be no such connection between one man and another, that one may not justly bear the iniquity of the other. A declaration, therefore, which, at most, has reference only to the private and personal sins of individuals, bound together by no other tie than consanguinity, and which, even there, is only true as a general principle, can never with any propriety be made the ground of an argument in reference to cases entirely dissimilar. The Protestant, however, may be much better qualified than we are, to reconcile the declaration of Ezekiel with those quoted from Moses and Jeremiah, and with the obvious departures from the principle it contains, recorded in the word of God and observed in his providence, and it is surely as much his concern to do this as ours.

The concession which the gentleman has here unintentionally made, is, however, important. According to him, for one man to bear the iniquity of another, is to have his guilt imputed to him. This is our doctrine, and the doctrine of the Reformed churches. This is what is meant by imputation, and nothing more nor less. That this is the case is evident, not only from the numerous quotations already made, but also from the fact that Calvinists constantly appeal to those passages in which Christ is said to have borne



our sins, as teaching this doctrine. He is said to bear our iniquities, precisely in the sense in which in Ezekiel it is declared that "the son shall not bear the iniquities of the father." If, therefore, as the Protestant thinks, the passage in Ezekiel denies the doctrine, the other passages must assert it in reference to Christ. Now let it be remembered, that these Calvinists affirm that we bear the sin of Adam, in the same sense (*eadem ratione, eadem modo*) in which Christ bore our sins, and what becomes of all his objections?

Our wonder is, that when the Protestant had caught the glimpse of the doctrine which is betrayed in this paragraph, he should in the very next entirely lose sight of it, and ask, "Whether the first principles of moral consciousness do not decide, that sin, in its proper sense, is the result of what we have done ourselves; not of what was done for us without our knowledge or consent? I ask, in what part of the Bible are we called upon to repent of Adam's sin? And finally, whether the historian would honestly say, with all his attachment to the opinions of the fathers, that he has ever so appropriated Adam's sin to himself as truly to recognise it as his own, and to repent of it as such?"—P. 342. That is, imputed sin becomes personal sin. The old mistake. Just before, to impute the sin of one man to another, was not to render that sin personally his, but merely to cause the one "to bear the iniquity" of the other, in the Hebrew sense of that phrase. He never could have imagined that when Ezekiel declared "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," he meant to say, that the son shall not have his father's sin made personally and subjectively his; when he quoted the prophet, therefore, he must have seen that to impute sin, meant to cause those to whom it is imputed to bear the punishment of it. We regret that our author did not arrive at this idea sooner, and that he did not retain it longer, as it would have saved him the trouble of asking all these questions, and us the trouble of answering them.

We have frequently been asked by young men if we have ever repented of Adam's sin, and have uniformly, to their obvious discomfort, answered in the negative. Knowing the sense in which the question was put, it would have confirmed their misconceptions to have answered otherwise. We have never so appropriated that sin as to recognise it as properly and personally our own, or as the ground of personal remorse. We have always considered this question as unreasonable as it would be to ask us, if we have ever felt self-approbation and complacency for the imputed righteousness of Christ. That there is a very just and proper sense in which we should repent of the sin of Adam, we readily admit; and are perfectly aware that old writers insist much upon the duty. Not however on the principle that his sin is personally ours, or that its moral turpitude is transferred from him to us; but on the principle that a child is humbled and grieved at the misconduct of a father; or that we are called upon to repent of the sins of our rulers, or of

our nation, or of our church (as was the case with the Corinthians);\* not as personally guilty of their sins, but in virtue of the relation in which we stand to them. It is just and proper, too, that we should recognize the justice of that constitution by which we bear the sin of our first father, remembering "that he was not on trial for himself alone," but also for us, and consequently that we fell when he fell, and should, therefore, bow before God as members of an apostate and condemned race.

We have now gone over those inquiries of the Protestant which we consider it important to notice, and answered them to the best of our ability. If there is anything in our reply adapted to disturb Christian harmony and brotherhood, we shall deeply regret it. Some apology, however, will be found in the fact, that we have been held up by the Protestant to the contempt and reprobation of the public for doctrines which we never held, and which we never, even in appearance, advanced. As this has been done ignorantly, we feel no manner of unkindness towards the writer, whoever he may be, although we think he was bound to understand what our doctrines were, before he thus unqualifiedly denounced them. There is not here a mere misapprehension of our meaning, which might be as much attributable to our want of perspicuity as to his want of discrimination; but there is an entire misapprehension of the whole doctrine of imputation, as held by common Calvinists. We are aware that some excuse for this is to be found in the manner in which President Edwards has presented the subject. But a man who undertakes to write on any doctrine, and especially severely to censure his brethren, ought to extend his views beyond one solitary writer, who, as in the case before us, may prove to be no fair representative of its advocates.

Our main object has been attained if we have succeeded in disabusing the minds of those brethren who have been accustomed to reject and condemn the doctrine of imputation, under the impression that it teaches a "oneness with Adam in action," and a "transfer of moral acts or moral character" from him to us. That this is not the doctrine, we hope we have abundantly proved. Nothing more is meant by the imputation of sin, than to cause one man to bear the iniquity of another. If, therefore, we bear the punishment of Adam's sin, that sin is imputed to us; if Christ bore the punishment of our sins, those sins were imputed to him; and if we are justified on the ground of Christ's righteousness, that righteousness is imputed to us. The question here arises, is this scriptural doctrine? As this, after all, is the main point, we regret that our limits absolutely forbid a full and satisfactory answer. As the decision of this question turns on principles which it would require much time and space fully to discuss, it would be in vain to argue about details while these principles remain unsettled. The difference of

\* This is one of the cases to which old writers refer for illustration. See Goodwin's Works, vol. iii., p. 372.

opinion on this subject, although manifested here, does not commence at this point, its origin lies further back, in diversity of views on the divine character and government.

Let us see, however, what the difference between our brethren and us as to the doctrine of imputation really is. They agree with us in saying that Adam was the federal head and representative of his race. Many of them use this precise language; and the *Spectator* employs a mode of expression perfectly tantamount to it when he says, "Adam was not on trial for himself alone," but for his posterity. They agree with us also in saying that the descendants of Adam suffer the consequences of his fall. What these consequences are, is a subject on which there is great diversity of opinion. Many maintain that the only direct consequence of the fall is mortality, or liability to temporal death; others, as Dr. Dwight (who may be taken as an example of a large class), say that depravity or corruption of nature is this consequence;\* others, as the *Spectator*, "that by a divine constitution, all his descendants were to have in their natural state the same character and condition with their progenitor; the universality and certainty of sin, therefore, are not the result of imitation or accidental circumstances, but of a divine constitution" (p. 343); others again, as the old Calvinists, say that the consequence of the fall was, that the same penalty which Adam incurred, came upon his posterity. Now it is evident that there is one difficulty, and it is the main one, which presses all these schemes in common, viz., that all mankind are made subject "to those consequences which Adam brought upon himself personally by his fall."—*Spectator*, p. 343. It is therefore evidently uncandid, though very common, for those who deny the doctrine of imputation, to represent this difficulty as bearing exclusively on that doctrine. They ask, with the utmost confidence, how it can be reconciled with the justice or goodness of God, that millions of innocent beings should suffer for a crime which they never committed? as though this difficulty did not press their own theory with equal (and we think tenfold greater) force. For what greater evil for moral and immortal beings can there be, than to be born "contaminated in their moral nature," as Dr. Dwight teaches; or under a divine constitution, as the *Spectator* says, which secures "the universality and certainty of sin," and that too with undeviating and remorseless effect. It is, as Coleridge well says, "an outrage on common sense," to affirm that it is no evil for men to be placed on their probation under such circumstances, that not one of ten

\* See his Sermon on Human Depravity derived from Adam. His doctrine is that "human corruption" is the consequence of Adam's sin. By corruption he means depravity of heart, or nature, antecedent to actual transgressions, or to moral agency. Because, he says, "Infants are contaminated in their moral nature, and born in the likeness of apostate Adam." This is irresistibly proved, he says, "by the depraved moral conduct of every infant who lives so long *as to be capable of moral action*."—P. 456, vol. i. Again, on p. 485, he says this depravity is proved by the death of infants. "A great part of mankind die in infancy, before they are or can be capable of moral action, in the usual meaning of that phrase."



thousand millions ever escaped sin and condemnation to eternal death. It is therefore idle to assert that there is no evil inflicted on us in consequence of Adam's sin, antecedent to our own personal transgressions. It matters not what this evil is, whether temporal death, corruption of nature, "certainty of sin," or death in its more extended sense; if the ground of the evil's coming on us is Adam's sin, the principle is the same.

The question then is, is this evil of the nature of punishment? If it is, then the doctrine of imputation is admitted; if not, it is denied. The Spectator thinks this a mere dispute about words. We think very differently. A principle is involved in the decision of this question, which affects very deeply our views, not only of the nature of our relation to Adam, and of original sin, but also of the doctrines of atonement and justification; the most vital doctrines of the Christian system. The distinction on which so much stress is laid by many who deny the doctrine of imputation, between mere natural consequences and penal evils, though it may be correct in itself, is not applicable to the case before us. An evil does not cease to be penal, because it is a natural consequence. Almost all the punishment of sin is the natural consequence of sin: it is according to the established course of nature (i. e., the will of God, the moral governor of the world), that excess produces suffering, and the suffering, under the divine government, is the punishment of the excess. Sin produces, and is punished by remorse. The fire that "is not quenched," and "the worm that never dies," may, for what we know, be the natural effect of sin. It matters not, therefore, whether mortality in Adam and his descendants be a natural consequence of eating the forbidden fruit (from its poisonous nature), which is a very popular theory, or whether death is a direct and positive infliction. Nor would it alter the case if native depravity was a natural result, as many suppose, of the same forbidden fruit, by giving undue excitability and power to the lower passions; because these effects result from the appointment of God, who is the author of the course of nature, and were designed by him to be the punishment of sin. We think the position of Storrs is perfectly correct, that the consequences of punishment are themselves punishment, in so far as they were taken into view by the judge in passing sentence, and came within the scope of his design.—*Zweck des Todes Jesu*, p. 585.

But, admitting the correctness of this distinction, we do not see how it is applicable to the present case, that is, how Dr. Dwight, and those who think with him, would make it appear that the moral corruption of the whole human race was the *natural* consequence of Adam's sin; much less how the Spectator can make it out, that "the universality and certainty of sin" is the natural consequence of that offence. Indeed, he appears to abandon that ground when he says that this certainty is by "divine constitution." Here then is an evil, not even a natural consequence, our being born under a constitution which secures the certainty of our being

sinners, and the ground or reason of this evil is of course not our own sin, but the sin of Adam. Is this evil a penalty? According to our view, it unquestionably is. It is an evil judicially inflicted on account of sin; it comes from God as the moral governor of the world. The Spectator, however, and many others, deny that the evils we suffer on account of Adam's sin are of the nature of punishment. The ground on which they do this, is, that it is utterly unjust that the punishment due to one, should, under any circumstances, be inflicted upon another. The assumption of this principle, without removing any difficulty, greatly aggravates the case, by representing that as a matter of sovereignty, which we regard as a matter of justice. The difficulty is not removed, for the difficulty is, that we should suffer for a crime which we never committed; but this the Spectator admits. The evil may be *materialiter* precisely the same, the question is now merely as to its formal nature. Is it then more congenial with the unsophisticated moral feelings of men, that God should, out of his mere sovereignty, determine that because one man sinned all men should sin; that because one man forfeited his favour, all men should incur his curse; or because one man sinned, all men should be born with a contaminated moral nature; than, that in virtue of a most benevolent constitution, by which one was made the representative of the whole race, the punishment of the one should come upon all? We know that a man's feelings are very much modified by his modes of thinking, and consequently, what shocks one person may appear right and proper to another; and, therefore, these feelings can be no certain criterion in such a case as this. For ourselves, however, we are free to confess that we instinctively shrink from the idea, that God in mere sovereignty inflicts the most tremendous evils upon his creatures, while we bow submissively at the thought of their being penal inflictions for a sin committed by our natural head and representative, and in violation of a covenant, in which, by a benevolent appointment of God, we were included. Besides, is it not necessary that a moral being should have a probation before his fate is decided? When had men this probation? Not, according to Dr. Dwight, in their own persons, for they are born depraved, and consequently under condemnation. Not in Adam—for this supposes that his sin forfeited for us the divine favour, or is the ground of our condemnation; but this is imputation. Is it then more unjust to condemn mankind for the act of their natural representative, in whom they had a fair and favourable probation, than to condemn them without any such probation? Determine, out of mere sovereignty, to call them into existence depraved, and then condemn them for this depravity? Nor does the Spectator's view much relieve the difficulty. For a probation to be fair, must afford as favourable a prospect of a happy as of an unhappy conclusion. But men are brought up to their trial, under a "divine constitution," which secures the certainty of their sinning; and this is done because an individual sinned thousands of years before the

vast majority of them were born. Is this a fair trial? Would not any man in his senses prefer to have his fate decided by the act of his first father, in the full perfection of his powers, intellectual and moral, than to have it suspended on his own first faltering moral act of infancy, performed under a constitution which secures its being sinful? According to the Spectator, therefore, the probation of man is the most unfavourable possible for that portion of the race which arrives at moral agency; and those who die before it never have any, at least not in this world. The race as such is not fallen; for this implies the loss of original righteousness and of the divine favour. The former, however, was never possessed; the latter, by one half mankind, never forfeited, and for them no Saviour can be needed.

The principle which the Spectator so confidently lays down, is, in our apprehension, decidedly anti-scriptural, subversive of important doctrines, and requires a mode of interpretation to reconcile it with the word of God, which opens the door to the utmost latitudinarianism. This expression of opinion is not intended *ad invidiam*; very far from it. If there is no foundation for this apprehension, the expression of it will pass unheeded; and if there is, it deserves serious consideration. The Spectator will agree with us in saying, that any objection brought against a doctrine taught in the Bible, or supposed to be taught there, is answered, if it can be shown to bear against the providence of God. If, therefore, the assertion, that it is unjust that one man should, under peculiar circumstances, suffer the penalty due to another, can be shown to militate with facts in the dispensation of the divine government, it is thereby answered. Is it then a fact that the punishment due to one man has ever, in the providence of God, been inflicted on others? We think no plainer case can be cited, or well conceived, than that of the fall itself. God threatened our first parent with certain evils in case of disobedience; he did disobey; the evil is inflicted not only on him, but on his posterity. If any part of this evil is antecedent to personal sinfulness, then the ground of it is Adam's sin. But it is admitted on almost all hands, that some evil is inflicted antecedently to personal ill desert; some say it is temporal death, others corruption of nature, the Spectator certainty of sinning (an awful infliction!); it matters not what it is, it is evil inflicted by a judge in the execution of a sentence—and that is punishment. We think, therefore, that it is arguing against an admitted fact, to maintain that one man can never bear the iniquity of another.

Although one instance, if fully established, is as good as a thousand to show that the principle of the Spectator is untenable, we may refer to others recorded in the scriptures. The case of Achan is one of these. The father committed the offence, and his whole family were put to death by the command of God. Was not the death of the children, in this instance, of the nature of punishment? It was evil, not a natural consequence, but a positive infliction, solemnly imposed on moral agents by divine com-



mand, for a specific offence. It is on the ground of this and similar examples ; as the punishment of Canaan for the act of Ham ; of the sons of Saul for the conduct of their father, 2 Sam. xxi. 8, 14 ; of the children of Israel for the sin of David, 2 Sam. xxiv. 15 and 17 : that Grotius, the jurist and theologian, says, “ Non esse simpliciter injustum *aut contra naturam poenae*, ut quis puniatur ob aliena peccata.”—*De Satisfactione*, p. 312.

The objection, therefore, of the Spectator, founded on the supposed injustice of one man ever being punished for the sin of another, we consider as answered ; first, because it bears with equal, if not with accumulated force against his own doctrine of evil consequences ; and secondly, because we think it militates with facts in the providence of God, and if valid, is valid against the divine administration.

We have other reasons, however, for the opinion which we ventured to express, that the Spectator's principle was anti-scriptural. It contradicts the positive assertions of scripture, as we understand them. We can only refer to two instances of this kind. In the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, from the twelfth verse to the twenty-first, we consider the apostle as not only asserting, but arguing on the principle that one man may bear the iniquity of another. His object is to illustrate the method of justification. As we have been condemned for a sin which is not our own, so we are justified for a righteousness which is not our own. That we have been thus brought under condemnation, he proves from the universality of death, the penalty of the law. This penalty was not incurred by the violation of the law of Moses, because it was inflicted long before that law was given ; neither is it incurred in all cases by the actual violations of a law which threatens death, because it comes on those who have never actually violated any such law ; therefore it is for the one offence of one man that the condemnatory sentence (the κρίμα ἐῖς κατάκριμα) has passed on all men. The disobedience of one man is no more simply the occasion of all men being sinners, than the obedience of one is merely the occasion of all becoming righteous. But the disobedience of the one is the ground of our being treated as sinners ; and the obedience of the other is the ground of our being treated as righteous. This view of the passage, as to its main feature, is adopted by every class of commentators. Knapp, in his *Theology*, quoted above, sect. 76, in speaking of the doctrine of imputation, says, “ That in the Mosaic history of the fall, although the word is not used, the doctrine is involved in the account.” In the writings of the Jews, in the paraphrases of the Old Testament, in the Talmuds and rabbinical works, the sentence, “ the descendants of Adam suffer the punishment of death on account of his first sin,” frequently occurs, in so many words. This doctrine of imputation was very common among them, he says, in the times of the apostles. “ Paul teaches it plainly, Rom. v. 12—14, and there brings it into connection with the Christian doctrines. He uses respecting it precisely the same

expressions which we find in the writings of the rabbins." On the following page, in reference to the passage in Rom. v. 12—14, he says that the doctrine of imputation is here more clearly advanced than in any other portion of the New Testament. "The modern philosophers and theologians," he remarks, "found here much that was inconsistent with their philosophical systems. They, therefore, explained and refined so long on the passage, that they at length forced out a sense from which imputation was excluded; as even Doederlein has done in his system of theology. They did not consider, however, that Paul uses precisely the same modes of expression which were current among the Jews of that age respecting imputation; and that his cotemporary readers could not have understood them otherwise than as teaching that doctrine; and that Paul, in another passage, Heb. vii. 9, 10, reasons in the same manner. Paul shows, in substance, that all men are regarded and punished by God as sinners, and that the ground of this lies in the act of *one* man; as, on the other hand, deliverance from punishment depends on one man, Jesus Christ." He immediately afterwards says, that unless force is done to the apostle's words, it must be acknowledged that he argues to prove that the ground on which men are subject to death, is not their personal sinfulness, but "the imputation of Adam's sin."\*

Zachariae, of Goettingen, understands the apostle in the same manner. In his *Biblische Theologie*, vol. ii., pp. 394, 395, he says, "Imputation with Paul, is the actual infliction on a person of the punishment of sin; consequently the sin of Adam is imputed to all men, if there is any punishment inflicted on them on account of that sin. His whole reasoning, Rom. v. 13, 14, brings this idea with it. Sin is not imputed according to a law, so long as that law is not yet given; yet punishment was inflicted long before the time of Moses. His conclusion, therefore, is, where God punishes sin, there he imputes it; and where there is no punishment of a sin, there it is not imputed." "If God, therefore, allows the punishment which Adam incurred to come on all his descendants, he imputes his sin to them all. And in this sense Paul maintains that the sin of Adam is imputed to all, because the punishment of the one offence of Adam has come upon all." On page 386 he gives the sense of Rom. v. 18, thus, "The judicial sentence of God, condemning all men to death, has passed on all men, on account of the one offence of Adam." This is precisely our doctrine. It matters not, as far as the principle is concerned, how the *θавας* in this passage is explained.

Whitby has the same view. He insists upon rendering ἐφ' ᾧ, "in whom," because, he says, "It is not true that death came upon all

\* Knapp does not himself admit the doctrine of imputation; at least, not without much qualification. He does not deny the apostle's plain assertion of the doctrine, however, but gets over it by saying that he is not to be interpreted strictly, but as speaking in a general and popular sense.

men, *for that*, or *because*, all have sinned. For the apostle directly here asserts the contrary, viz.: That the death and condemnation to it which befell all men, was for the sin of Adam only." "Therefore the apostle doth expressly teach us that this death, this condemnation to it, came not upon us for the sin of all, but only for the sin of one, i. e., of that one Adam, *in whom all men die*."—1 Cor. xv. 22.

We refer to these authors merely to make it appear, that even in the opinion of the most liberalized writers, the plain sense of scripture contradicts the principle of the Spectator, that one man can never be punished for the sin of another. This sense, we are persuaded, cannot be gotten rid of, without adopting a principle of interpretation which would enable us to explain away any doctrine of the word of God. The older Calvinists, as we have seen, considered the denial of imputation, or in other words, the assumption of the principle of the Spectator, as leading to the denial of original sin or native depravity. They were, therefore, alarmed when some of their French brethren rejected the former doctrine, though they at that time continued to hold the latter. Their apprehensions were not unfounded. Those who made this first departure from the faith of their fathers, very soon gave up the other doctrine, and before long relapsed into that state from which, after so long a declension, they are now struggling to rise. Without any intention of either casting unmerited odium on any of our brethren, or of exciting unnecessary apprehensions, we would seriously ask, if there is no evidence of a similar tendency in the opinions of some brethren in this country. The doctrine of imputation has long been rejected by many, both within and without the bounds of our own ecclesiastical connection, who still hold, with Dr. Dwight, to native depravity, or that men are born "contaminated in their moral nature." How this can be just, or consistent with the divine perfections, if not a penal infliction, it is difficult to perceive. We are, therefore, not surprised to find that some of the most distinguished theologians of this school, now deny that there is any such contamination of nature; or that men are morally depraved before they are moral agents, and have knowingly and voluntarily violated the laws of God. These gentlemen, however, still maintain that it is certain that the first moral act in every case will be sinful. But this seems very hard: that men should be brought up to their probation, under "a divine constitution" which secures the certainty of their sinning. How this is to be reconciled with God's justice and goodness any better than the doctrine of Dr. Dwight, we are unable to discover; and therefore apprehend that it will not long be retained. The further step must, we apprehend, be taken, of denying any such constitution, and any such dire certainty of sinning. And then the universality of sin will be left to be explained by imitation and circumstances. This, as it appears to us, is the natural tendency of these opinions; this has been their actual course in other countries, and to a certain extent, also, among ourselves. If our brethren



will call this arguing *ad invidiam*, we are sorry for it. They do not hesitate, however, to say, that our opinions make God the author of sin, destroy the sinner's responsibility, weaken the influence of the Gospel, and thus ruin the souls of men.

But if the Spectator's principle, that one man can never suffer the punishment of the sins of another, is correct, what becomes of the doctrine of atonement? According to the scriptural view of this subject, Christ saves us by bearing the punishment of our sins. This, as we understand, is admitted. That is, it is admitted that this is the scriptural mode of representing this subject. Our brethren do not deny that the phrase, "to bear the iniquity of any one," means to bear the punishment of that iniquity, as in the passage in Ezekiel, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," and in a multitude of similar cases. Where, therefore, the Bible says, that "Christ bore our sins," it means, that he bore the punishment of our sins; or rather, as Grotius says, it cannot mean anything else. "*Peccata ferre patiundo, atque ita ut inde liberentur alii, aliud indicare non potest, quam poenae alienae susceptionem.*"—P. 300. And not only the scriptures but even the Greek and Latin authors who use this phrase, he says, "*semper imputationem includunt.*" This, however, on the Spectator's principle, must be explained away; and the ground be assumed, that the scriptures mean to teach us only the fact that Christ's death saves us, but not that it does so by being a punishment of our sins. But if this ground be taken, what shall we have to say to the Socinians who admit the fact as fully as we do? They say, it is by the moral impression it produces on us; our brethren say, it is by the moral impression it produces on the intelligent universe. If we desert the Bible representation, have they not as much right to their theory as we have to ours? This is a subject we cannot now enter upon. Our object is, to show that this is no dispute about words; that the denial of the doctrine of imputation not only renders that of original sin untenable; but involves, either the rejection or serious modification of those of atonement and justification.

## ESSAY VII.

# THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTATION.\*

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WE would remind our readers that in the history of Pelagianism, which called forth this discussion, we stated, "That Adam's first transgression was not strictly and properly that of his descendants (for those not yet born could not perform an act), but interpretatively or by imputation;" and secondly, that imputation does not imply "the transfer of moral acts or moral character." The mere declaration of our belief of this doctrine, and conviction of its importance, led to the first communication of the Protestant on the subject. He made no objection to the correctness of our exhibition of the subject; his inquiries were directed against the doctrine itself. His article was written, as he now informs us, "to lead the author of that piece (the history of Pelagianism) to see and feel, that one who undertook the office of a corrector with severity, should weigh well whether he had any *faux pas* of his own to correct." This accounts for the *schooling* manner so obvious in his communication, and which seems to have escaped his observation. We think it right to turn his attention to this subject, because he is abundant in the expression of his dissatisfaction "with the spirit and manner" of our articles. We acknowledge that we are as blind to the bad spirit of what we have written, as he appears to be to the character of his inquiries. This proves how incompetent a judge a man is in his own case, and should teach him and us how easy it is to slip into the very fault we condemn in others, and to mistake mere dissent from our opinions for disrespect to our persons. We are prepared to make every proper acknowledgment for any impropriety of manner with which Christian brethren may think us chargeable, although our sincere endeavour to avoid an improper spirit, while penning the articles in question, must prevent any other confession than that of sorrow at our want of success.

We were much surprised to find that we had mistaken the main object of the Protestant's first communication. He now says, "The writer in the Repertory has chosen his own ground; and,

\* The remarks which follow were called forth by two articles in the Christian Spectator of March, 1831.

passing over my main points and at least nine tenths of all I had said, has selected the topic of *imputation*, which was only a very subordinate one with me, and occupied no less than forty-eight pages in descanting on this.”—P. 156. The editors of the *Spectator* were no less unfortunate in their apprehension of his object, for they head his communication, “Inquiries respecting the Doctrine of Imputation.” Indeed the Protestant himself seems to have laboured under the same mistake. For, p. 339 (vol. 1830), he says it was his object “to submit a few inquiries and difficulties in respect to some statements which he (the historian in the *Repertory*) had made.” He then quotes our statement respecting “the imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity,” and no other. On p. 340, he adds, “For the present, I neither affirm nor deny the doctrine of imputation. But I frankly confess I have difficulties.” He then states these difficulties in order, introducing them after the first, by “Again,” “Again,” “Once more,” “Finally,” “Last of all,” to the close of the piece. We inferred from all this that the doctrine of imputation, so far from being “a very subordinate point” with him, was the main point, and indeed the only one. This is a very small matter; we notice it merely to let him see on what slight grounds he sometimes expresses dissatisfaction.

To these inquiries communicated by the Protestant, the editors of the *Spectator* appended a series of remarks, intended to show that we had abandoned the views of the older Calvinists on this subject. In these remarks they hold the following language: “Adam’s first act of transgression was not strictly and properly that of his descendants, says the historian. The sin of the apostasy is truly and properly theirs, say Edwards and the rest.” Again, “We are glad, likewise, to see him proceed one step farther.” This farther step, they tell us, is the denial of “any transfer of moral acts or moral character.” That both the Protestant and editors considered the doctrine as involving these two ideas, is also evident from the nature of their objections. The former inquires of us, whether we have ever repented of Adam’s sin, and founds most of his difficulties on the principle that there can be no sin where there is no knowledge of law, and as there can be no knowledge of law at the first moment when men begin to exist, he infers there can be no imputation of Adam’s sin at that period. See p. 341. And the *Spectator* says, “No one who does not totally confound all notions of personal identity, can hesitate to admit, that the historian has done right in rejecting the old statements on this subject.”—P. 343.

In our reply to the above mentioned articles, we undertook to prove that these gentlemen had misapprehended the views of old Calvinists on the nature of imputation; and maintained that this doctrine does not involve “any mysterious union with Adam, so that his act was personally and properly our act, or that the moral turpitude of his sin was transferred from him to us.” This statement was repeated so often and so explicitly, that no one could



fail to see it was our object to prove "that neither the idea of personal identification, nor transfer of moral character, is included in the doctrine of imputation."\* This, therefore, is the real point in debate; and it is one of importance. For if the doctrine does, when properly explained, include these ideas, then have its opponents done well in rejecting it; and its advocates, instead of wasting time in its defence, would serve the cause of truth by at once following their example. And on the other hand, if these ideas form no part of the doctrine, then do all the objections founded on them fall to the ground. And as these objections are the main and indeed almost the only ones, to establish the point at which we aim is to redeem an important truth from a load of aspersions, and vindicate it even in the eyes of its opposers. The question then is, are we correct in the ground which we have assumed. If the Protestant and editors have done anything to the purpose in their reply, it must be in proving that old Calvinists taught that "Adam's act was strictly and properly our act, and that its moral character was transferred from him to us." If they have accomplished this object, we owe them many acknowledgments for having opened our eyes to a doctrine we have professed, without understanding, the greater part of our life. And this obligation will not be confined to us. For we may state, without intending to compliment ourselves, that we have heard from many old Calvinists of different denominations, in various parts of our country, and no whisper has reached us of the exhibition of the doctrine made in the *Repertory* being a departure from the faith. Without an exception, those who have spoken on the subject at all have said, as far as we know, "So we hold the doctrine, and so we have always understood old Calvinists to teach it." As they who profess to receive any doctrine, and to incorporate it in their system of faith, may be supposed to feel a deeper interest in it than those who have always been taught to reject it, we may, without arrogance, presume that the probability is in favour of old Calvinists understanding their own opinions, and our brethren being mistaken in their apprehensions of the subject. Let us, however, see how the matter stands.

It may facilitate the proper understanding of this subject to state, in a few words, the distinct theories which have been adopted respecting the connexion between the sinfulness of men, and the fall of their first parent.

1. Some hold, that in virtue of a covenant entered into by God with Adam, not only for himself but for all his posterity, he was constituted their head and representative. And in consequence of this relation, his act (as every other of a public person acting as such) was considered the act of all those whom he represented. When he sinned, therefore, they sinned, not actually but virtually; when he fell they fell. Hence the penalty which he incurred comes on them. God regards and treats them as covenant-break-

\* See *Biblical Repertory* for July, 1830, p. 436, et passim.

ers, withholds from them those communications which produced his image on the soul of Adam at his first creation; so that the result is the destitution of original righteousness and corruption of nature. According to this view, hereditary depravity follows as a penal evil from Adam's sin, and is not the ground of its imputation to men. This, according to our understanding of it, is essentially the old Calvinistic doctrine. This is our doctrine, and the doctrine of the standards of our church. For they make original sin to consist, 1st. in the guilt of Adam's first sin; 2dly, the want of original righteousness; and 3dly, the corruption of our whole nature. This, too, is President Edwards's doctrine throughout two thirds of his book on original sin. We never meant to say anything inconsistent with this assertion, with regard to this great man. We stated that in the portion of his work from which the Spectator quoted, he had abandoned the old ground, and adopted for the sake of answering a particular difficulty the theory of Stapfer, which, however, contradicted the general tenor and explicit statements of the former part of his work.

2. Others exclude the idea of imputation of Adam's sin, but admit that all men derive by ordinary generation from our first parents a corrupt nature, which is the ground, even prior to actual transgressions, of their exposure to condemnation. This is essentially the view of Placæus, against which, as we endeavoured to show, the Calvinistic world of his time protested. This is the view, in the main, of Stapfer, and in one place of Edwards. This is Dr. Dwight's doctrine, and that of many others. Most of the older advocates of this opinion retained at least the name of imputation, but made the inherent corruption of men the ground of it.

3. Others again on the same principle involved in the former theory, viz., that the descendants should be like their progenitor, suppose that the nature of Adam having become weakened and disordered, a disease or infirmity, not a moral corruption, was entailed on all his posterity. So that original sin, according to this view, is not *vere peccatum*, but a malady. This is the view of many of the Remonstrants, of Curcellæus, of Limborch, of many Arminians and Lutherans. Many refer this disorder of human nature to the physical effect of the forbidden fruit.

4. There are those, who rejecting the ideas of imputation of Adam's sin, of moral innate depravity, or of an entailed imbecility of nature, and adopting the idea that all sin consists in acts, maintain that men come into the world *in puris naturalibus*, neither holy nor unholy (as was the case with Adam at the time of his creation); and that they remain in this neutral state until they attain a knowledge of law and duty. They account for all men sinning, either from the circumstances in which they are placed, or from a divine constitution.

The view taken by the true Hopkinsians, who adopt what is called the "exercise scheme," is somewhat different from all these,

as they suppose the moral exercises of the soul to commence with its being; and that these in every case should be sinful, was decided by the fall of Adam.

These, as far as we know, are all the radical views of this subject. There are, of course, various modifications of these several systems. Thus, some retain the idea of the imputation of Adam's sin, but reject that of inherent hereditary depravity. This was the case with many of the most distinguished catholic theologians of the age of the Reformation. Others again, uniting part of the first and third view, teach that original sin consists in the imputation of Adam's first transgression, and an enfeebled, disordered constitution, but not a moral corruption.

This enumeration of the various opinions on original sin, and of our relation to Adam, is given, not because we suppose our readers ignorant on the subject, but because it is necessary in order to understand the language of the old authors and confessions, to bear in mind the opinions which they meant to oppose or condemn. Had the Protestant done this it would have preserved him from the strange oversight of quoting from the old confessions the declaration that original sin is *vere peccatum*, as having any bearing on a discussion on the nature of imputation. Of this, however, in the sequel. In order to the correct interpretation of particular modes of expression occurring in any author it is, however, not only necessary that we bear in mind the nature of the opinions which he may be opposing, but most especially the nature of his own system, whether of philosophy, theology, or of whatever else may be the subject of discourse. Here, as we think, is most obviously the great source of error in the gentlemen of the Spectator. They seem entirely to overlook the distinctive theological system of the old Calvinists, and detaching particular modes of expression from their connexion in that system, put upon them a sense which the words themselves will indeed bear, but which is demonstrably foreign to that in which these writers employed them, and directly contradictory of their repeated and explicit statement of their meaning. These gentlemen err precisely as the early opponents of the Reformers and Calvinists did, by *insisting on taking in a moral sense, modes of expression which were used, and meant to be understood, in a judicial or forensic sense*. This is the *πρωτον ψεδος* of our New Haven brethren on this subject, and it runs through all their exhibition of the views of the old Calvinistic doctrine. In this respect they are treading, as just remarked, in the footsteps of all the early opposers of these doctrines. When the reformers taught that we were rendered righteous or just by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, their opponents at once asked, How can the righteousness of one man be transferred to another? If this doctrine be true, then are believers as just as Christ himself—they have his moral excellence. They further asserted, that the reformers made Christ the greatest sinner in the world—because they taught that the sins of all men were imputed to him. To these



objections the reformers answered, that imputation rendered no man inherently either just or unjust—that they did not mean that believers were made morally righteous by the righteousness of Christ, but merely *forensically*, or in the eye of the law—and that it was mere confusion of ideas on the part of their adversaries which led to all these objections. We take it, this is precisely the case with our brethren of the Spectator. We find them making the identical objections to the doctrine of imputation which were urged by some of the Catholics, and afterwards by the Remonstrants; and we have nothing to do but to copy the answer of the old Calvinists, which is a simple disclaimer of the interpretation put on their mode of expression. They say they never intended that the moral character of our sins was conveyed to Christ, nor of his righteousness to us, nor yet of Adam's sin to his posterity—but that all these cases are judicial or forensic transactions; that in virtue of the representative character which Christ sustained, he was in the eye of the law (not morally) made sin for us, and we righteousness in him; and in virtue of the representative character of Adam we are made sinners in him, not morally, but in the eye of the law. A moment's attention to the old Calvinistic system will convince, we hope, the impartial reader that this representation is correct.

In reference to the two great subjects of the fall and redemption, they were accustomed to speak of the two covenants of works and grace. The former was formed with Adam, not for himself alone but for all his posterity; so that he acted in their name and in their behalf. His disobedience, therefore, was their disobedience, not on the ground of a mysterious identification or transfer of its moral character, but on the ground of this federal relation. When Adam fell, the penalty came on all his race, and hence the corruption of nature which we all derive from him is regarded by old Calvinists as a penal evil. The second covenant they represent as formed between God and believers in Jesus Christ, in virtue of which Christ stands as the representative of his people. Their sins were imputed to him, or he assumed their responsibilities, acted and suffered in their name and in their behalf. Hence, on the condition of faith his righteousness is imputed to them, that is, is made the ground of their being judicially justified. No one at all familiar with the writings of the older Calvinists, can fail to have remarked that this whole scheme is founded on the idea of representation, and that it involves the assumption of the transfer of *legal obligation* but not of *moral character*—two things which the Spectator perpetually confounds. And here is their radical misconception, as we have already remarked. Nothing is more common than to illustrate this idea by a reference to transfer of pecuniary obligations, which is a matter of every day occurrence. But, as the cases are not in all respects analogous, the old Calvinists are very careful in stating the difference, and in asserting the justice and propriety (under certain circumstances) of the transfer

of legal obligation even in cases of crime. And although this, from the nature of the case, can rarely occur in human governments, as no man has a right to dispose of life or limb, yet it is not without example.

It is on this idea of representation, of one acting for another, that they maintained the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us. The nature of this imputation is in all these cases the same. They are all considered as forensic transactions. The obligation to punishment in the two former cases, and the title to pardon and acceptance in the last, arising not out of the *moral character* but the *legal standing* of those concerned. Christ's obligation to suffer arose not from the moral transfer of our sins, but from his voluntary assumption of our law-place, if modern ears will endure the phrase. And our obligation to suffer for Adam's sin, *so far as that sin is concerned*,\* arises solely from his being our representative, and not from our participation in *its* moral turpitude. And so finally they taught that the believer's title to pardon and heaven is not in himself. Christ's righteousness is his, not morally, but judicially. Hence the distinction between imputed and inherent righteousness; and between imputed and inherent sin. The former is laid to our account on the ground of its being the act of our representative, but is not us, nor morally appertaining to us; it affects our standing in the eye of the law, but not our moral character: the latter is ours in a moral sense.†

We have stated that the imputation spoken of in all these cases is in nature the same, and therefore, that what is said of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us, is properly appealed to in illustration of the nature of imputation, when spoken of in reference to Adam's sin. To this the Protestant strongly objects. "I cannot but notice one thing more," he says, "the reviewer everywhere in his piece appeals to the *imputation of Christ's righteousness*, as decisive of the manner in which

\* These are points taught to children in their catechism;

Q. How is original sin usually distinguished?

A. Into original sin *imputed*, and original sin *inherent*.

Q. What is original sin imputed?

A. The guilt of Adam's first sin.

Q. What is original sin inherent?

A. The want of original righteousness, and the corruption of the whole nature.

Q. What do you understand by the guilt of sin?

A. An obligation to punishment on account of sin. Rom. vii. 23. [Of course the guilt of Adam's sin which rests on us, is an obligation to punishment for that sin, not its moral turpitude.]

Q. How are all mankind guilty of Adam's first sin?

A. By imputation [not inherently]. Rom. v. 19, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."

Q. Upon what account is Adam's first sin imputed to his posterity?

A. On account of the legal union betwixt him and them, he being their legal head and representative, and the covenant being made with him, not for himself only, but for his posterity; likewise, 1 Cor. xv. 22, "In Adam all die."—See Fisher's Catechism.

† Our exposure to punishment for our own inherent depravity is a different affair.

Adam's sin is imputed to us. Now this is the very point which Calvin in so many words denies," &c., p. 161. Again, on the next page, "As the reviewer so often refers to the doctrine of imputation as triumphantly established in Christ's sufferings and merits, and seems to think that nothing more is necessary than merely to make the appeal in this way, in order to justify such a putative scheme as he defends; I add one more question for his solution, viz: 'Is the righteousness of Christ ever imputed to sinners, *without any actual repentance and faith*? If not, then how can the analogy prove that Adam's sin is imputed to us without any act on our part, and that we are condemned before any actual sin at all?' He does not appear once to have thought that here is a difficulty, which no part of his explanations has even glanced at. Nay, he does not even suppose it possible to make any difficulty." He is mistaken as to both points. The idea is one of the most familiar connected with the whole subject; and in our former article, the distinction to which it refers is clearly stated, and abundantly implied elsewhere. The Protestant's difficulty evidently arises from his allowing his mind to turn from the *nature* to the *justice* of imputation in these several cases. Now although there is a great and obvious difference between the appointment of a person as a representative, with the consent of those for whom he acts, and his being so constituted without that consent, yet the difference does not refer to the nature of representation, but to the justice of the case. Thus a child may either choose its own guardian, or he may be appointed by a competent authority, without the child's knowledge or consent. In either case the appointment is valid; and the guardian is the legal representative of the child, and his acts are binding as such. Any objection, therefore, to the justice of such an appointment, has nothing to do with the nature of the relation between a guardian and his ward. Nor has an objection to the justice of Adam's being appointed our representative without our consent, any bearing on the nature of the relation which old Calvinists supposed to exist between him and us. If they believe that this was the relation of representation;\* and if this were as-

\* This opinion is not confined to old Calvinists. "In this transaction between God the Creator and Governor, and man the creature, in which the law, with the promises and threatenings of it, was declared and established in the form of a covenant between God and man, Adam was considered and treated as comprehending all mankind. He being by divine constitution the natural head and father of the whole race, they were included and created in him [this goes beyond us] as one whole, which could not be separated; and therefore he is treated as a whole in this transaction. The covenant made with him was made with all mankind, and he was constituted the public and confederating head of the whole race of men, and acted in this capacity, as being the whole; and his obedience was considered as the obedience of mankind; and as by this Adam was to obtain eternal life had he performed it, this comprehended and insured the eternal life of all his posterity. And on the contrary, his disobedience was the disobedience of the whole of all mankind; and the threatened penalty did not respect Adam personally, or as a single individual; but his whole posterity, included in him and represented by him. Therefore the transgression, being the transgression of the whole, brought the threatened punishment on all mankind." We are glad that this is not the language of an old Calvinist, but of Dr. Hopkins.—See *System of Doctrines*, vol. i., p. 245, and abundantly more to the same purpose in the following chapter.



sumed as the ground of imputation in all the cases specified, there is the most obvious propriety in appealing "to the imputation of Christ's righteousness as decisive of the manner in which Adam's sin is imputed to us;" according to the opinion of old Calvinists, especially as they state with the most abundant frequency, that they mean by imputation in the one case precisely what they mean by it in the other.

This analogy is asserted by almost every old Calvinist that ever wrote. "We are constituted sinners in Adam, in *the same way* that we are constituted righteous in Christ; but in Christ we are constituted righteous by imputation of righteousness; therefore we are made sinners in Adam by the imputation of his sin, otherwise the comparison fails."—*Turretin*. "We are accounted righteous through Christ, in *the same manner* that we are accounted guilty through Adam."—*Tuckney*. "As we are made guilty of Adam's sin, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us; so are we made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us."—*Owen*. We might go on for a month making such quotations. Nothing can be plainer than that these men considered these cases as perfectly parallel as to the point in hand, viz., the nature of imputation. And consequently if they taught, as the Protestant and Spectator imagine, that the moral turpitude of Adam's sin was transferred to us, then they taught that Christ's moral excellence was thus transferred; that we are made inherently and subjectively holy, and Christ morally a sinner, by imputation; the very assertion which they constantly cast back as the slanderous calumny of Papists and Remonstrants. Why then will our brethren persist in making the same representation?

But if these cases are thus parallel, how is it that Calvin, Turretin, Owen say they differ? asks the Protestant. It might as well be asked, how can cases agree in *one* point, which differ in *another*? Because the imputation of Christ's righteousness is, as to its nature, analogous to the imputation of Adam's sin—does it hence follow that our justification can in no respect differ from our condemnation? or, in other words, must our relation to Christ and its consequences be, in all respects, analogous to our relation to Adam and *its* consequences? Paul tells us, and all the old Calvinists tell us, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to the justification of life," and yet, that these cases differ. The judgment was for one offence, the "free gift" had reference to many; one is received by voluntary assent on our part, the other comes in virtue of a covenant or constitution (if any man prefers that word), which, though most righteous and benevolent, was formed without our individual concurrence. And besides, we are exposed to condemnation not on account of Adam's sin *only*, but *also* on account of our own inherent hereditary depravity; whereas the righteousness of Christ is the *sole* ground of our justification, our inherent righteousness, or personal holiness

being entirely excluded. And this is the precise point of difference referred to by Calvin in the passage quoted by the Protestant, which he not only misunderstands, but mistranslates. After saying there are two points of difference between Christ and Adam, which the apostle passes over because they were not to his purpose, he adds, “Prior est, quod, peccato Adæ, non per *solam* imputationem damnatur, acsi alieni peccati exigeretur a nobis poena; sed ideo poenam ejus sustinemus quia *et* culpe sumus rei quatenus scilicet natura nostra in ipso vitiata, iniquitatis reatu obstringitur apud Deum.” The plain meaning of which is, that we are not condemned on the ground of the imputation of Adam’s sin *solely*, but *also* on account of our own depraved nature; whereas, the righteousness of Christ is the *sole* ground of our justification, our sanctification having nothing to do with it. This is the difference to which he refers. Precisely the doctrine of our standards, which makes original sin to consist not only in the guilt of Adam’s sin, but also in corruption of nature. Two very different things. The reason of Calvin’s insisting so much on this point was, that many of the leading Catholics of his day, with whom he was in perpetual controversy, maintained that original sin consisted *solely* in the imputation of Adam’s sin; that there was no corruption of nature, or hereditary depravity. Hence Calvin says, it is not *solely* on the former ground, but *also* on the latter that we are liable to condemnation. And hence, too, in all his writings he insists mainly on the idea of inherent depravity, saying little of imputation; the former being denied, the latter admitted by his immediate opponents. This is so strikingly the case, that instead of being quoted as holding the doctrine of imputation in a stronger sense than that in which we have presented it, he is commonly appealed to by its adversaries as not holding it at all.

The Protestant need only throw his eye a second time upon the above passage, to see that he has misapprehended its meaning and erred in his translation. He makes Calvin say, “We are condemned, not by imputation merely, as if punishment were exacted of us for another’s sin, but we undergo its punishment (*viz*: the punishment of Adam’s sin), *because we are chargeable with its criminality* (*viz*: the criminality of Adam’s sin) [directly against the reviewer again].” Yes, and against Calvin too; for there is nothing in the original to answer to the word *its*, and the insertion entirely alters the sense. Calvin does not say that we are chargeable with the criminality of Adam’s sin, but just the reverse: “non per *solum* imputationem damnatur, acsi alieni peccati exigeretur a nobis poena; sed ideo poenam ejus sustinemus, quia *et* culpe sumus rei, quatenus scilicet natura nostra in ipso vitiata, iniquitatis reatu obstringitur apud Deum.” “We are condemned not on the ground of imputation *solely*, as though the punishment of another’s sin was exacted of us; but we endure its punishment because we are *also* ourselves culpable (how? of Adam’s sin? by no means, but we are culpable), inasmuch as, *viz*: our nature having been

vitiated in him, is morally guilty before God" (*iniquitatis reatu obstringitur apud Deum*). Here is a precise statement of the sense in which we are morally guilty, not by imputation, but on account of our own inherent depravity. Two things which the Protestant seems fated never to discriminate.

Besides, the Protestant, after making Calvin say, "we are chargeable with *its* criminality" (*viz*: the criminality of Adam's sin), thus renders and expounds the immediately succeeding and explanatory clause, beginning, "*quatenus scilicet*," &c.: "Since our nature being in fact vitiated in him, stands chargeable before God with criminality, i. e., *with sin of the same nature with his*." Now it certainly is one thing to say we are chargeable with Adam's sin, and another that we are chargeable with sin of the same nature with his. Hundreds who admit the latter, deny the former. Yet the Protestant makes Calvin in one and the same sentence say, we are chargeable with the one, since we are chargeable with the other. That is, we are guilty of Adam's sin, because guilty of one like it. This, in our opinion, is giving the great Reformer credit for very little sense. We make these criticisms with perfect candour. Of their correctness let the reader judge. This "egregious mistake" of the Protestant (we use his own language, p. 158) doubtless arose from his not having thought it his "duty to launch into the dispute about imputation," nor, as we presume, to examine it. To the same cause is probably to be traced the character of the following paragraph; which strikes us as being peculiarly out of taste and unfortunate: "This (the passage quoted from Calvin) settles the whole controversy at a single stroke—not as to what is truth—but as to what is old *Calvinism*. If Calvin be not permitted to speak for himself, this is one thing; but if he be, then Tuckney, and De Moor, and the reviewer's notable French synod, would have done well to read Calvin instead of arguing *à priori* in order to prove what he has said." It settles nothing at all, except that Calvin admitted both doctrines, the imputation of Adam's sin and inherent depravity. It is true, if the clause, "*acsi alieni peccati exigeretur a nobis poena*," be cut to the quick, and taken apart from its connection, it does deny our doctrine and Calvin's own assertion. For in saying that Adam's sin is not the *sole* ground, it admits that it is *one* ground of our condemnation. If I say a man is condemned, not for piracy merely, but also for murder, do I not assert that both are the ground of his condemnation? If the clause in question be viewed historically, in the light thrown upon it by the opinions of those with whom Calvin was contending, and in connection with other declarations in his works, its consistency with the common Calvinistic theory will be apparent. He meant to say, in opposition to Pighius and other Catholics, that men were not condemned on the ground of the act of another, solely, without having a depraved moral character; but being inherently corrupt, were in themselves deserving of death.

This is a distinction which he often makes. In his creed written



for the school at Geneva, he says, “Quo fit, ut singuli nascuntur originali peccato infecti, et ab ipso maledicti, et a Deo damnati, non propter alienum delictum *duntaxat*, sed propter improbitatem, quae intra eos est.” Whence it is clear that according to Calvin, men are condemned both *propter alienum peccatum*, and their own depravity. The same sentiment occurs frequently. But supposing we should admit, not that Calvin taught that Adam’s sin was morally our sin, for of this the passage contains not a shadow of proof, but that he denied the doctrine of imputation altogether, *nul- lius addicti jurare in verba magistri*, it would not much concern us. We have not undertaken to prove that Calvin taught this or that doctrine, but that Calvinists, as a class, never believed that imputation involved a transfer of moral character.

It is, moreover, a novel idea to us, that a sentence from Calvin can settle at a single stroke a controversy as to what Calvinists as a body have believed. We have not been accustomed to suppose that they squared their faith by such a rule, or considered either his Institutes or Commentaries the ultimate and sole standard of orthodoxy. Tried by this rule, the synod of Dort, the Westminster divines, the old Puritans, and even Beza and Turretin were no Calvinists. Sure it is, we are not. There is much in Calvin which we do not believe and never have. We do not believe that Christ descended *ad inferos* and suffered the pains of the lost. Yet Calvin not only taught this, but that it was of great importance to believe it. A controversy of this kind is not so easily settled. The only proper standard by which to decide what Calvinism is, is the confessions of the Reformed churches and the current writings of standard Calvinistic authors. We make these remarks merely in reference to the Protestant’s short and easy method of dispatching the business; not at all as admitting that Calvin rejected the doctrine of imputation. Controversy seems to have had in him, in a measure, its natural effect. As his opponents went to one extreme, he may have verged towards the other. As they, in regard to original sin, made too much of imputation, he was under a strong bias to make too little of it. As they denied entirely the corruption of nature, he was inclined to give it an overshadowing importance. Yet, as we have just seen, his works contain explicit declarations of his having held both points, as the great body of Calvinists has ever done.

But to return from this digression. The point of difference between “Christ and Adam,” to which Calvin refers, does not, therefore, pertain to the nature of imputation, which is the matter now in debate, but to the fact, that although inherent sin enters into the ground of our condemnation, inherent righteousness is no part of the ground of our justification. It is stated very nearly in the same terms by Turretin and others, who, notwithstanding, uniformly maintain that we are constituted sinners in Adam (*eodem modo, eadem ratione*), in the same manner that we are constituted righteous in Christ. Turretin, vol. ii., p. 703, in refuting the Catholic doc-

trine of justification, says, “Christus per obedientiam suam recte dicitur nos justos constituere non per inhaerentem justitiam, sed per imputatam, ut Rom. iv. 6 docetur, et ex oppositione antecedentis condemnationis, cap. v. 19, colligitur. Justi enim non minus constituuntur coram Deo, qui propter obedientiam Christi ipsis imputatam absolvuntur a meritis poenis, quam ii qui propter Adami inobedientiam injusti constituuntur, i. e., rei sunt mortis et condemnationis.” Here then it is expressly stated, the obedience by which we are constituted just in the sight of God is not inherent (that which affects or forms our own moral character), but imputed (i. e. laid to our account), exactly as the disobedience of Adam by which we are constituted unjust, i. e., exposed to death and condemnation, is not inherent in us. So far the cases are parallel—that is, so far as imputation is concerned. But after this the parallel does not hold; because we derive from Adam a corrupt nature (inherent depravity) which is *also* a ground of exposure to death, whereas the internal holiness which is the fruit of Christ’s Spirit is no part of the ground of our justification. “Nec si Adamus nos *etiam* injustos constituit effective per propagationem vitiositatis inhaerentis, propter quam *etiam* rei mortis sumus coram Deo, sequitur pariter Christum nos justos constituere per justificationem forensem judicii Dei per justitiam inhaerentem nobis ab ipso datam.” The precise doctrine of Calvin, and our standards, and of the Repertory.

This seems the proper place to correct another mistake of the Protestant. After quoting from the Gallic Confession, 1566, the declaration, “*Original sin, is vere peccatum*, by which all men, even infants in the womb, are subject to eternal death,” he says, “Now the old Calvinists did not make two sins, first Adam’s, and secondly original sin as resulting from it. All was one sin (*peccatum originis*), reaching throughout the whole race, even to infants in the womb. It must then be in their *union* to Adam, that infants in the womb have *vere peccatum*, i. e., what is *really* and *truly* sin. But the reviewer says their sinning in Adam was merely *putative*—that to make it really and truly their sin, destroys the very idea of imputation. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that his view of the subject is diametrically opposed to that of the Gallican churches.” It need hardly be remarked that we have here again the pervading misapprehension to which we have so often referred. Old Calvinists *did* make two sins, first the sin of Adam, and secondly inherent depravity resulting from it. The former is ours *forensically*, in the eye of the law; the latter morally. The former is never said to be in us *vere peccatum*; the latter, by Calvinists, always. This is a distinction which Calvin makes in the very passage quoted by the Protestant. It is made *totidem verbis* by Turretin, as we have just stated. It is made in the very catechisms of the church. Original sin consists “in the guilt of Adam’s first sin,” “and the corruption of the whole nature.” See also the passage quoted above from Fisher. “Original sin is usually distinguished into original sin *imputed*, and original sin *inherent*.” The Augsburg Confession,

in a formal definition of original sin, makes the same distinction. "Intelligimus autem peccatum originis, quod sic vocant Sancti Patres, et omnes orthodoxi et pie eruditi in ecclesia, videlicet reatum quo nascentes propter Adae lapsum rei sunt irae Dei et mortis aeternae, ET ipsam corruptionem humanae naturae propagatam ab Adamo." Turretin, in speaking of the adversaries of the doctrine of imputation, includes those who do not make the distinction in question. Thus of Placaeus, he says, "Adversariorum commentum adoptavit, et dum totam rationem labis originalis constituit in habituali, subjectiva et inhaerenti corruptione, quae ad singulos per generationem ordinariam propagatur, imputationem istam rejicit." Our French synod, for which the Protestant seems to have so little respect, but who in charity may be supposed to have known what were their own doctrines, formally condemned the view which he asserts was the common doctrine of Calvinists. "Synodus damnavit doctrinam ejusmodi, quatenus peccati originalis naturam ad corruptionem haereditariam posterorum Adae ita restringit, ut imputationem excludat primi illius peccati, quo lapsus est Adam." The Westminster Assembly, as we have already seen, in their catechism assume the very same ground. Burgess, one of the leading members of that Assembly, in his work on Original Sin, p. 32, says, "As in and by Christ there is an imputed righteousness, which is that properly which justifieth, and as an effect of this we have also an inherent righteousness, which in heaven will be completed and perfected; thus by Adam we have imputed sin with the guilt of it, and inherent sin the effect of it." Again, p. 35, "The apostle distinguisheth Adam's imputed sin and inherent sin, as two sins" ("directly in the very teeth of the" Protestant, if we may be permitted to borrow one of his own forcible expressions). "By imputed sin we are said to sin in him actually, as it were, because his will was our will (*jure repraesentationis*), but by inherent sin we are made sinners by intrinsical pollution." We sin in Adam as we obey and suffer in Christ, the disobedience of the one is ours, in the same way and in the same sense in which the obedience of the other is ours. In neither case is the moral character of the act of one person transferred to another, which is a glaring absurdity. We hope there is not a single reader who does not perceive how surprisingly the Protestant has erred in his appeal to the old confessions. The passages which he quotes have nothing at all to do with the subject of imputation, but were intended to define the nature of that *hereditarium vitium* which is diffused through the race. As the term original sin is used sometimes in a broader, and sometimes in a more restricted sense, sometimes as including both imputed and inherent sin, and sometimes only the latter, the Protestant has strangely confounded the two things. The early Reformed churches were anxious to guard, on the one hand, against the doctrine of some of the Catholics, that original sin consisted *solely* in imputation, without any corruption of nature; and on the other, against the idea that the hereditary evil of which they spoke was a



mere disease, and not a moral corruption. Hence we find the assertion reiterated, that this *hereditarium vitium* is vere peccatum. But never that imputed sin is vere peccatum. One might as well assert, that as the sanctification of the heart, or inherent righteousness wrought by the Spirit of God, is truly of a moral character, therefore Christ's imputed righteousness is so too.

In danger of utterly wearying the patience of our readers, and proving to them the same thing for the twentieth time, we must be allowed to make a few more quotations in support of the position which we have assumed. That is, to prove that imputation does not include the transfer of moral character; that in the case of Adam there is a sin, which, by being imputed to us, renders us forensically guilty, but not morally; as in the case of Christ, there is a righteousness, which, by being imputed to us, renders us judicially, but not morally righteous. One would think that enough had been presented, in our former article, abundantly to establish this point. The declaration of Owen, however, that, "*To be alienae culpae reus, MAKES NO MAN A SINNER,*" passes for nothing. His affirming that, "Nothing more is intended by the imputation of sin unto any, than the rendering them justly obnoxious unto the punishment due unto that sin; as the not imputing of sin is the freeing of men from being subject or liable to punishment;" produces no effect. In vain, too, does Tuckney say, in one breath, that it is blasphemous to assert that the imputation of our sins to Christ, or his righteousness to us, conveys the moral character of either, and in the other, that we are accounted righteous through Christ in the same manner that we are accounted guilty through Adam.

Let us see, therefore, whether we can find anything still plainer on the subject.

Turretin, vol. ii., p. 707, after stating that imputation is of two kinds, 1st, where something is laid to a man's charge which he himself performed, and 2d, where one is regarded as having done what, in fact, he did not perform, infers from this, that to impute "is a forensic term, which is not to be understood physically of infusion of righteousness (or unrighteousness) but judicially and relatively." "*Unde colligitur vocem hanc esse forensem, quae non est intelligenda physice de infusione justitiae, sed judicialiter et relative.*"

Immediately after, in answer to the objection that if a thing is only putative, it is fictitious, he says, the conclusion is not valid: "*Cum sit res non minus realis in suo ordine scilicet juridico et forensi, quam infusio in genere morali seu physico.*" Again, p. 715,\* "*Justitia inhaerens et justitia imputata, non sunt sub eodem genere. Illa quidem in genere relationis, Ista vero sub genere qualitatis:*" Whence he says, the same individual may be denominated just or

\* Having already shown that, according to Turretin and other Calvinists, the nature of imputation is the same, whether spoken of in reference to sin or righteousness, such passages are perfectly *ad rem*.

unjust, sub diversa  $\sigma\chi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\sigma\iota$ . "For when reference is had to the inherent quality, he is called a sinner and impious, but when the external and forensic relation is regarded, he is pronounced just in Christ. It is true, indeed, no one can be called inherently just by the righteousness of another, because if it be inherent it is no longer another's. Yet he can, by imputation, be declared *justified*." Again, same page, "When God justifies us on account of the imputed righteousness of Christ, his judgment is still according to truth, because he does not pronounce us just in ourselves subjectively, which would be false, but in another imputatively and relatively, which is, in the strictest sense, true."

Now, in all these cases, if language be capable of expressing ideas, it is most distinctly asserted that imputation is a forensic term; that the act which it expresses does not affect the moral character, but the legal relation of those concerned: that imputed sin and imputed righteousness do not come sub genere qualitatis, but sub genere relationis. Hence Turretin says, p. 715, "Christus propter imputatum ipsi nostrum peccatum, non potest dici peccator, quod importat corruptionem inhaerentem."

On p. 716, the following passage occurs: "Ut inobedientia Adami vere nos peccatores constituit per imputationem\* (a declaration which will be seized upon with both hands; but hear the whole). Ita et justitia Christi vere nos justificat imputative. Ita *imputatum* bene opponitur *inhaerenti*, sed non *vero*, quia non fingimus imputationem, quae consistat in mera opinione et juris fictione, sed quae maxime realis est et vera, SED ISTA VERITAS EST IMPUTATIONIS, NON INFUSIONIS, JURIDICA, NON MORALIS." We shall for ever despair of proving anything, if this does not prove that imputation, according to Turretin at least, does not involve the transfer of moral character. The imputation of the disobedience of Adam constitutes us sinners, and the imputation of the obedience of Christ constitutes us righteous. Now in what sense? Ans. JURIDICALLY, NOT MORALLY.

There are many passages in the old authors which distinctly assert the absurdity and impossibility of such a transfer of moral character, as the ancient and modern opposers of the doctrine of imputation charge them with believing. Turretin, p. 711, in proving that we are justified by the righteousness of Christ, which is ours, "non utique per inhaesionem, sed per imputationem," gives, among others, the following reasons, 1. "Quia actus unius non potest fieri

\* Some may say here is a direct contradiction. Imputation constitutes one truly a sinner, yet just before, our sin being imputed to Christ does not render him a sinner. And so there is a point-blank contradiction. Exactly such an one as the Protestant says he has a thousand times charged on old Calvinists, and which he, or any one else, may charge on any author in the world, if you take his words out from their connection, and force on them a sense which they by themselves may bear, but which was never intended. To any man who thinks a moment on the subject, there is no contradiction. Imputation of sin constitutes us sinners in one sense, but not in another; in the eye of the law, but not morally. Thus Paul says that Christ, though he knew no sin, was made sin (i. e., a sinner). As much of a contradiction, as in the passages before us.

plurium, nisi per imputationem.” (It cannot become theirs by transfer, or infusion, it can only, on some ground of union, be laid to their account.) 2. “Quia κατὰ κρίμα (Rom. v. 18), cui opponitur δικαίωσις ζωῆς, non est actus physicus, sed forensis et judicialis.” That is, as the act by which we are constituted, or declared guilty on account of Adam’s sin, is not a physical act rendering us morally guilty; so our justification, on account of the righteousness of Christ, is not a rendering us formally or subjectively righteous. In each case the process is forensic and judicial. And immediately after he quotes the following passage from Bellarmin, as containing a full admission of the doctrine of imputation: “Peccatum Adami communicatur nobis eo modo, quo communicari potest quod transit, nimirum per imputationem.” Sin, therefore, cannot pass by transfer. To this passage from the Catholic Cardinal, Turretin subjoins the remark, that it cannot be inferred from the fact, that we are also rendered sinners and liable to condemnation by the corrupt nature which we inherit from Adam, we are also justified by our inherent righteousness communicated by Christ in regeneration; because the apostle did not mean to teach that the cases are parallel throughout, though they are, as far as imputation is concerned. This is the point of difference to which we have already referred. On the same page we have the declaration, “Quod est inhaerens opponitur imputato.” And on the opposite, Christ is our righteousness before God, “non utique inhaerenter, quia justitia unius ad alium non potest transire, sed imputative.” It follows too, he says, from 2 Cor. v. 21. “Eo modo nos effici justitiam Dei in ipso, quo modo factus est pro nobis peccatum. At Christus factus est pro nobis peccatum, non inhaerenter aut subjective, quia non novit peccatum, sed imputative, quia Deus ei imputavit peccata nostra.”

In every variety of form, therefore, is the idea of transfer of moral character denied and rejected as impossible and absurd, and the assertion that it belongs to the Calvinistic doctrine of imputation treated as a calumny. Turretin, towards the close of his chapter on the imputation of Adam’s sin, in speaking of some, who on certain points agreed with Placaeus, says, that as to this, they do not depart from the common opinion. This, he states, was the case with Amyraldus, “qui fuse probat peccatum alienum posse juste imputari iis qui cum auctore aliquo vinculo juncti sunt, licet culpam non participarint.” Here then is a distinct assertion, that imputation does not imply a participation of the criminality of the sin imputed. In this case the word *culpa* is used in its moral sense. In proof of his assertion, Turretin quotes such passages as the following:—“Ex eo clarum esse potest, quomodo Apostolus intelligat doctrinam justificationis, nempe quod ut condemnatio qua condemnatur in Adamo, non significat qualitatem inhaerentem sed vel obligationem ad poenam, vel obligationis illius declarationem a potestate superiore; Ita justitia qua justificamur in Christo, non sit etiam qualitas inhaerens, sed vel jus obtinendae in judicio divino absolutionis, vel absolutio ipsa a iudice.”



We have taken our extracts principally from Turretin, because we thought a clearer view would be presented, by a comparison of various statements from the same author, than by disjointed declarations from several. We have pursued this course, the rather, because the Spectator does not pretend that Turretin differs from common Calvinists in his views on this subject. They themselves quote him as holding, what they consider the old Calvinistic scheme, and endeavour to show from his writings, that we have erred in our understanding and exposition of the point under discussion. He is an authority, therefore, to which, as to the question of fact, they will cheerfully bow. It would be easy, however, to multiply quotations to almost any extent from the whole range of standard Calvinistic writers in support of the views which we have presented. A very few, by way of example, will suffice. MARK, who has ever been considered as one of the most thorough and consistent theologians of the old school, in his *Historia Paradisi Illustrata*, has a chapter on imputation, in which, as well as in his *System of Theology*, the doctrine is presented precisely as we have exhibited it. According to him, the union, which is the ground of the imputation of Adam's sin—is that of representation, he being the common father and representative of the race. In his introductory paragraph he says, he proposes to speak, “*de omnium naturalium posterorum repræsentatione in Adamo ut communi parente et foederis capite.*”—P. 753. In Rom. v. 12, he says, we are taught the doctrine of imputation because all men are said “to have *sinned in Adam.*” This sinning *in Adam*, however, according to him, is asserted, not on the ground of a mysterious personal union—but “*Peccatum omnibus tribui actuale in eo uno homine Adamo, eos repræsentante.*” (The same doctrine is taught in the passage, he says, though  $\epsilon\phi' \text{ } \alpha$  be rendered *eo quod*, or *quandoquidem.*)

The analogy between the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the sin of Adam is repeatedly and strongly asserted. An analogy so strict, as far as imputation is concerned, that all the difficulties, “*tum exceptiones, tum objectiones,*” which are urged against the one, bear against the other; whether they be derived “*a Dei justitia et veritate, ab actus et personae Adamicæ singularitate, ex scelere longe ante nos præterito tempore, ex posterorum nulla scientia vel consensione in illud, ex non imputatis aliis omnibus factis et fatis Adami,*” or from any other source. Hence, he says, there is the greatest ground of apprehension (“*metus justissimus sit*”), if the one be rejected, the other will be discarded also. And, therefore, “*mirandum æque quam dolendum est,*” that some (Placæus and his followers) bearing the name of Reformed Theologians, should, “*sub specie curatioris attentionis et majoris cujusdam sapientiæ,*” revive these very objections, which, in his apprehension, the orthodox had answered “*tam solide et late,*” against the Socinians and Remonstrants. “*Quod ne serpat latius ad ecclesiæ patriæque totius novam turbationem et Pela-*

gianismi importunam reductionem, faxit pro sapientia et bonitate sua Deus!"\*

In direct opposition to the Protestant's assertion, that "Old Calvinists did not make two sins, first Adam's sin, and secondly original sin (depravity) as resulting from it," he, in common with all the Reformers, almost without exception, and the whole body of the reformed, constantly make the distinction between imputed sin and inherent corruption, maintaining that the latter could not be reconciled with God's justice, without the admission of the former. "Whatever is said," he remarks, "of a natural law, according to which corrupted Adam should beget a corrupt posterity, as a wolf begets a wolf, and a diseased man diseased children; and of no one being able to communicate to another what he has not himself, &c., it is all utterly vain, unless the JUDICIAL imputation of Adam's act be admitted." "Id omne, absque admissa judiciali imputatione Adamici facti, vanissimum est."—P. 756. And on the preceding page, he complains of Placæus as "not admitting imputation as the antecedent and cause of native corruption flowing from it." And adds, "Enim vero si ipsa Adami transgressio prima nos non constituit damnabiles, nec corruptio nativa pro poena illius in nobis debet haberi, sed ob Adami *peccaminosam similitudinem tantum rei coram Deo simus aut fiamus*, jam revera imputatio illa tollitur." The idea, therefore, that we are guilty, i. e., exposed to condemnation, because of our sinful likeness to Adam merely, which the Protestant represents as the true Calvinistic doctrine, is expressly rejected. This view of the judicial imputation of Adam's sin, as the cause and ground of innate corruption, is not a later addition to Calvinism, as has been inconsiderately asserted, but was taught by Calvin himself, and almost all his brother reformers. Calvin says, "*Deum justo judicio nobis in Adamo maledixisse ac voluisse nos ob illius peccatum corruptos nasci, peccasse unum, omnes ad poenam trahi*," &c. It is by the just judgment of God, therefore, according to Calvin, and as a punishment for Adam's sin, that we are born corrupt. To the same effect Beza speaks of the "corruptio, quæ est poena istius culpæ imposita tam Adamo quam posteris." And Martyr strongly asserts, "profecto neminem esse qui ambigat, peccatum originale nobis infligi in ultionem et poenam primi lapsus."

This view, as already stated, is not confined to Calvinists. The Augsburg confession, as quoted above, clearly expresses it. And further, the standards of the Lutheran Church assert that, "*Justo Dei judicio (in poenam hominum) justitia concreata seu originalis amissa esset*," by which defect, privation, or spoliation, human nature is corrupted. See Bretschneider, vol. ii., p. 33. This writer

\* We presume our brethren will consider this as another specimen of the *ad invidiam* argument. Though we question whether the idea entered their minds, that their making Owen assert that those who held our doctrine were pretty near Socinianism, was anything of the like nature. We do not object to their remark, for we are not, as we think, quite so sensitive as they are.

immediately adds, the same sentiment is contained in the assertion of the Apology I., p. 58. "Defectus et concupiscentia sunt poenae (des Adamischen Vergehens, von dem die Rede ist). Melancthon held the same doctrine. "Melancthon betrachtete auch den Verlust des Ebenbildes und des Entstehen der *concupiscentia* als Strafe für Adam's Vergehen." And in the next page he quotes from his Loci Theolog. the following passage, "Revera autem perpetua Ecclesiae sententia est, prophetarum, apostolorum et scriptorum veterum: peccatum originis non *tantum* esse imputationem, sed in ipsa hominem natura caliginem et pravitatem."\* Here we have the common view to which we have so often referred, original sin includes both imputation of Adam's sin, and inherent depravity. Bretschneider himself says expressly, that according to the Schmalckald Articles and the Form of Concord, "Beides, das Vergehens Adams sowohl als das dadurch entstandene Verderben selbst Ursache der Strafe sey." "Both Adam's transgression, and the corruption thereby occasioned, is the ground of punishment." Here "are two sins—first Adam's, and secondly depravity resulting from it."

We refer to this expression of opinion by the early Reformers, to show that not merely Calvinists, but Lutherans also, held the doctrine of imputation as we have exhibited it. That they held the doctrine cannot be denied, and the way in which they understood it, is plain, from their calling imputation a forensic or judicial act, a declaration of one as a sinner in the eye of the law, in opposition to his being rendered so in a moral sense; precisely as justification is a rendering just legally, not morally. The same thing is plain from the illustrations of the subject, with which their works abound—illustrations borrowed from the imputation of our sins to Christ, of his righteousness to us, of parents' sins to their children, &c., and finally from the constant representation of inherent, innate depravity, as a penal evil. If penal, of what is it the punishment? Of Adam's sin. Then, if this sin be morally ours, they taught that men are punished with moral depravity for being morally depraved—they assumed the existence of corruption, to account for its existence! All becomes plain, if you will allow these men to mean what they say they meant, viz., that in virtue of our union with Adam as our common father and representative, his offence is judicially regarded (not physically rendered) ours, and on the ground of its imputation to us (i. e., of its being judicially laid to our account), the penalty came on us as well as on him; hence the loss of original righteousness and corruption of nature are penal evils.

This, we are persuaded, is the common Calvinistic doctrine on this subject. The Protestant blames us for being so confident as to this matter. We *are* confident, and to such a degree, that we are willing to submit to all the mortification arising from the exposure of ignorance, where ignorance is most disgraceful, viz., of

\* Loci Theologici, p. 86. Detzer's edition, 1828.



one's own long-cherished opinions, if either the Protestant or Spectator will accomplish the task as to the point in debate. Let it be recollected what that point is: Does the doctrine of imputation, as taught by old Calvinists as a body, include the ideas of "literal oneness" and transfer of moral acts or moral character? Prove the affirmative of this, and we stand ready to confess ignorance, and to renounce old Calvinism. As both the Protestant and Spectator have made the attempt and repeated it without in our judgment, with modesty be it spoken, throwing the weight of a straw's shadow into the opposite scale, our confidence, to say the least, is not weakened. We make this remark in no overweening spirit; but having been thus taught the doctrine in question on our mother's knees—having heard it thus explained from the catechism and pulpit all our lives,—to have it now asserted, "you know nothing of the matter; the true doctrine includes impossibilities and absurdities (and blasphemies too) of the most monstrous kind," takes us not a little by surprise, and finds us not a little incredulous.

Let us, however, for a moment see what are the most plausible grounds on which their allegations rest. The Protestant, indeed, tells us, "he has not thought it his duty to launch into the dispute itself about imputation," but intended to make only "a few observations." In these observations he does not deny that the exhibition given in the Repertory of the views of Turretin, Owen, &c., is correct. He says, indeed, these writers contradict themselves, but that they taught as we have represented them to do he admits; for he has not said a word to rebut the positive declarations which we adduced from their writings, but questions their competency as witnesses as to what Calvinism is. If, therefore, we had no other opponent in this discussion, we assuredly should not have thought it necessary to say another word on the subject, until he had so far condescended as to show either that Turretin, Owen, De Moor, Tuckney, and the French Synod of 1645, were not Calvinists, or that we had misapprehended or misstated their views.

He expresses great surprise at our appealing to such authorities. "I confess," he says, "this mode of establishing the reviewer's opinions struck me with not a little surprise. What? A *Presbyterian*, and leave the Westminster confession out of view?" Again, "But why did he not go to the *standards* of the Calvinistic churches instead of Turretin and Owen? As he has not done it I must do it for him."—P. 159. The answer to all this is very easy. The point in debate is not, whether Calvinists held the doctrine of imputation, for this is not denied, but how did they understand it? This question is not to be decided by appealing to the old confessions, because in them we find the mere assertion of the doctrine, not its explication. They tell us that "original sin includes the guilt of Adam's first sin;" the question is, what does this mean? The Protestant and Spectator say it means one thing; we say it means another. Who is to decide? One would think the original framers, adopters, and expounders of these confessions—the very persons

to whom we appealed—and whose testimony the Protestant so disrespectfully rejects. But if the framers of an instrument are not to be permitted to tell us in what sense they meant it to be understood, we know not where to go for information. We were very much surprised to find even the Spectator saying, that from our silence with regard to their reference to the Westminster catechism, they supposed we meant tacitly to admit our dissent from the doctrine of imputation as taught by the Westminster divines, p. 163. This remark is the more singular, as the very point in dispute was, in what sense those divines and Calvinists generally held the doctrine. It would have been strange indeed to admit our dissent from the very men with whom we were labouring to prove we agreed. Besides, in introducing the testimony of Tuckney, p. 445, we stated that he was a member of the Westminster Assembly, and of the committee to draft the confession of faith, and the author of a large part of the catechism, and therefore, “a peculiarly competent witness as to the sense in which our formularies mean to teach the doctrine of imputation.”\*

But the Protestant thinks we had very good reasons for not appealing to the old confessions. “What? A *Presbyterian* and leave the Westminster confession out of view? Why this? was the spontaneous question! For a reason plain enough. The reviewer recollected the answer he used to give, when a child, to a catechetical question, viz., *Sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression*. Indeed? Sinned in him? Then there is something more than *putative* sin; for here Adam’s sin is *our* sin, and his guilt is our guilt,” and so on, p. 159. We shall endeavour to answer this seriously. What do our standards and old Calvinists generally mean when they say, “All mankind sinned in Adam?” The expression obviously admits of two interpretations; the one, that which the Protestant and Spectator would put upon it, viz., that in virtue of a “literal oneness,” all mankind really acted in him—his act was literally our act; the other proceeds on the principle of representation—we acted in him as our representative. This latter interpretation is at least possible. First, because it is a very familiar mode of expression. Nothing more common. Every monarch is said to do what his representatives do. “The good people of the United States, in Congress assembled.” Were

\* On the same page the Spectator says of us, that notwithstanding our tacit acknowledgment of dissent from Calvin and the Westminster divines, “Still they maintain that the doctrine, as they hold it, was the real doctrine of the reformed churches, though they acknowledge that Doederlein, Bretschneider, and other distinguished writers on theology, are against them on this point.” If the Spectator will turn to the passage, p. 438, to which he refers, he will find that we make no such acknowledgment. We were speaking, not of the “reformed churches,” but of “Augustine and his followers.” It was to the latter, we stated, these writers attributed the idea of literal and personal oneness, between Adam and his posterity—not to the reformed churches. So far from it, they expressly distinguish the theory of Augustine from that of federal union, which they say prevailed among the reformed. We know of no “distinguished writer on theology” who maintains the ground assumed in the Spectator, in reference to the opinions of the great body of Calvinists.

they ever thus actually assembled? Are not the people said to do everything that is done in their name? Good, says the Protestant, but we never appointed Adam our representative. True. But this bears on the justice of his being so constituted and so acting; not on the propriety of saying "We sinned *in* him," on the supposition of his being our representative, which is the only point now at issue. Common usage, then, bears out this interpretation. Secondly, biblical and theological usage does the same. The apostle says, "Levi paid tithes *in* Abraham." Again, Paul says, in reference to this subject, *ἅπασαν τὴν ἡμετέραν*, which a multitude of commentators, Pelagian, as well as others, render "in whom all sinned." Do they all hold the doctrine of literal oneness with Adam? Does Whitby, who maintains the words will admit of no other rendering, understand them as expressing this idea? Besides, when the Bible says we died with, or in Christ—are raised in him—do they mean we actually died when he died, and rose when he rose?

The interpretation, therefore, which we put on the phrase in question is possible. But, further, it is the only interpretation which, with a shadow of reason, *can* be put upon it in our standards. First, because, times without number, their authors, and the theological school to which they belonged, expressly declare this to be their meaning—and secondly, because their illustrations prove it. Yet the Spectator, p. 168, says, "The oneness described by Turretin is a literal oneness, not something resulting from stipulation or contract." We are filled with wonder that such a declaration should come from such a source. They had before attributed the same doctrine to our standards. Had they been *Presbyterians*, and learnt the catechism, they never could have made such an assertion. "The COVENANT being made with Adam, as a public person, not for him only but for his posterity, all mankind descended from him by ordinary generation sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression."\* If English be any longer English, this means that it was our representative—as a public person we sinned *in* him—in virtue of a union resulting from a covenant or contract. Let it be noted that this is the *only* union here mentioned. The bond arising from our natural relation to him, as our common parent, is not even referred to. It is neglected because of its secondary importance, representation being the main ground of imputation; so that when representation ceases imputation ceases, although the natural bond continues. Let us now hear Turretin, who holds "this literal oneness." "Adamus duplici isto vinculo nobiscum junctus est: 1. *Naturali* quatenus Pater est, et nos ejus filii; 2. *Politico* ac *forensi* quatenus fuit princeps et caput representativum totius generis humani." This is a formal, precise definition of the nature of the union. Is there anything mysterious in the bond between parent and child, the representative and those for whom he acts? "The foundation, therefore," he continues, "of

\* Larger Catechism.



imputation, is not merely the *natural* connexion which exists between us and Adam, for were this the case all his sins would be imputed to us—but *principally* the *moral* (not physical; just above it was called *political*) and *federal*, on the ground of which God entered into covenant with him as our head. Hence in *that sin* Adam acted not as a private but a public person and representative, &c.”—P. 679. Here, as before, it is a “oneness” resulting from contract which is made the ground of imputation—the *natural* union is frequently not mentioned at all. Thus, p. 689, in stating in what sense we acted in Adam, or how his act was ours, he says it is “*repraesentationis jure*.” Again, p. 690, “Although, after his first sin, Adam did not cease to be our head *ratione originis*, yet he did cease to be our representative head *relatione foederis*.” And therefore the ground of imputation no longer existed. Thus Marck says, as quoted above, “All men sinned in Adam, *eos repraesentante*.” Again, in his *Medulla*, p. 159, “*Justissima est autem haec imputatio, cum Adam omnium fuerit parens*, coll. Exod. 20, 5, ‘*visitans iniquitatem patrum super filios*,’ &c., et praeterea foederaliter omnes repraesentaverit.” The *natural* connexion with Adam is, therefore, the relation between parent and child. All mankind, says Fisher, in his exposition of the catechism, “descended from Adam by ordinary generation, were represented by him as their covenant head, and THEREFORE sinned in him.” “Qui enim actu nondum fuimus, cum Adamus peccaret, *actu quoque peccare non potuimus*.”—Wendeline (a strict Calvinistic Hollander), *Christiana Theologia*, p. 258. It is just, however, he says, that Adam’s sin should be imputed to us, i. e., considered ours; “Quia Adam totum quoque humanum genus repraesentavit.”

Now for some of the illustrations of the nature of this union. First, we were *in* Adam, as we were *in* Christ, the act of the one is ours, as the act of the other is. So Turretin repeatedly, p. 689. As the act of Adam is ours, *repraesentationis jure*, sic justitia Christi est actus unius, and yet ours, on the same principle. Again, Quamvis non fuimus (in Adamo) actu—yet being in him as a father and representative, his act was ours—Ita quamvis non fuimus actu in Christo, still, since he died *for* us, his death is virtually our death. “Ergo ut in Christo satisfecimus, *ita* et in Adamo peccavimus.”\* Again, we were in Adam as Levi was in Abraham, p. 687. Was this literally?

It is surely unnecessary to dwell longer on this point. The Spectator, indeed, tells us that, according to the old writers, “Adam’s posterity, ‘were *in* him as branches in a root,’ ‘as the members are in the head.’” Well, what does this mean? Literal oneness? Surely not. Does every writer who speaks of a father as the root of his family, hold to the idea of a “literal oneness” between them. You may make as little or as much as you please

\* Zanch. Epist., quoted and approved by Leydecker, Fax Veritatis, p. 444.

out of such figurative expressions, taken by themselves. But by what rule of interpretation they are to be made to mean directly the reverse of what those who employ them tell us they intend by them, we are at a loss to divine. It must be a strange "literal oneness" which is founded on the common relation of parent and child, or of representation. Yet these are the only bonds between us and Adam which Turretin acknowledges, and of these the former is comparatively of so little importance, as very commonly to be left out of view entirely, when speaking on the subject.

But we must hasten to another point. The main dependence of the Spectator, in his attempt to prove our departure from the old Calvinistic system, is on the use of the word "ill-desert." But words, he tells us, p. 321, are nothing. Let us have ideas. We said, the ill-desert of one man cannot be transferred to another. Turretin says, "The ill-desert of Adam is transferred to his posterity." Admitted, freely. Is not this a direct contradiction? Not at all. Turretin says, on one page, "Imputation of sin does not constitute one a sinner,"\* on the very next, "The imputation of Adam's sin does constitute all men sinners." Is there any contradiction here? So the Protestant would say: but there is none. Let language be interpreted, not by the tinkling of the words, but by the fair and universal rules of construction. Imputation does render a man a sinner, in one sense, and not in another—judicially, not morally. So justification renders a man just in the eye of the law, but not inherently. How often may the same verbal proposition be, with equal propriety, affirmed or denied! How obvious is it, that the same man may, at the same time, be pronounced both just and unjust, sub diversa *σχέσει*! This is an evil—an ambiguity in the sense of terms, which pervades all language, and which subjects every writer to the charge of contradicting himself and everybody else, any one may take a fancy to place in opposition to him. The word *guilt* is as ambiguous as the word *sinner*. It is sometimes used in a moral, at others in a legal sense; and so is the word *ill-desert*. We used it in the former, Turretin in the latter. These are points to be proved. As to the first, viz., that we used the word ill-desert in its moral sense, it is plain, if from no other fact, at least from this, that the Spectator so understood it, so understands, and so urges it. He, therefore, at least, must be satisfied. It is plain, too, from this fact, that we (in the history of Pelagianism) interchanged it with the phrases "moral acts" and "moral character," in a way clearly to evince that we employed them as equivalent expressions. And the Spectator quotes them, as meaning precisely the same thing. That this was our meaning is still plainer, if possible, from the fact, that in the long discussion of the nature of imputation, the word ill-desert does not occur at all. Seeing the confusion of ideas which prevailed, we endeavour to prevent all cause of stumbling, by avoid-

\* So Owen, "To be *culpae alienae reus* makes no man a sinner."

ing an ambiguous word, and by repeating, we fear to weariness, that it was “moral acts,” “moral character,” “moral turpitude,” the transfer of which we denied; and so again the Spectator understood us. The difficulty is, not that they have mistaken our meaning, but that they misunderstand Turretin. All we have to prove is, that they consider Turretin to use the word ill-desert in a moral sense, as equivalent to moral turpitude, or moral character; and secondly, that in this they commit an obvious mistake. If we establish these two points, we shall be in clear day again. As to the first, it hardly needs proof, for it is the very point they have from the beginning been labouring to establish—viz., that imputation conveys the moral character of the act imputed. On p. 165, they ask, “What then *was* our sin in Adam? It was, as Turretin tell us, in a passage quoted above (*commune peccatum, communis culpa*), ‘a sin, a criminality *common* to Adam and his whole race.’ But they all affirm, that it was ‘*vere peccatum*,’ ‘*truly sin*,’ AS TRULY SO AS ARE ANY OF OUR PERSONAL, i. e., ACTUAL TRANSGRESSIONS.”\*

Now as to the second point, viz., that Turretin and other Calvinists do not use the words *guilt*, *demerit*, *ill-desert*, &c., as the Spectator understands them, in a moral sense, we have already proved it, and might abundantly prove it again, because they expressly, repeatedly and pointedly affirm the contrary. Thus, when he says, “We are constituted truly sinners by the imputation of Adam’s sin,” he tells us as plainly as language permits, in what sense, “*ISTA VERITAS EST IMPUTATIONIS, NON INFUSIONIS, JURIDICA, NON MORALIS.*” The sin of Adam is a *common* sin. In the Spectator’s sense or ours? Let Turretin answer. “The act of Adam is universal (or common) *repraesentationis jure*—quia *individuum illud universum genus humanum repraesentavit.* Sic *Justitia Christi*,” is common on the same ground and in the same way, p. 689. Again, to impute is a forensic term, meaning to set to one’s account, “*non est actus physicus, sed forensis et judicialis* ;” it is to render one a sinner in the eye of the law, not morally—as the imputation of righteousness renders legally, and not inherently just. Alas! how often must this be said? Again. Imputed sin is constantly opposed to inherent. The one comes under the category of *relation*, the other under that of *quality*—one affects our legal standing, and the other our moral character. See above.

We might prove the point in hand, 2dly, from the illustrations which he gives of the subject. These illustrations are drawn from the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to us, of our sins to Him—of those parental sins, which are visited on children, &c. Take two passages in addition to those already quoted. “As the righteousness of Christ, which is one, can yet be communicated by imputation, to an innumerable multitude; and as the guilt of those sins of parents which are imputed to their descendants, is one and

\* These capitals are ours.



the same, which passes upon all; so nothing prevents the guilt of Adam's sin being one and equal, which passes on all men."—P. 690. The guilt of Adam passes, therefore, as the righteousness of Christ does, and as the guilt of those parental sins which are imputed to their children. Now, if any sane man will maintain that the righteousness of Christ, according to Turretin, is rendered morally ours; or, more monstrous still, that the moral turpitude of parents is transferred to their children—then we shall leave him in undisturbed possession of his opinion. Again, to the same effect, p. 689. "It is inconsistent with divine justice that any should be punished for a sin foreign to him, *foreign* in every sense of the word; but not for a sin, which, although it be foreign *ratione personae*, is yet *common* in virtue of representation or some bond of union, by which its guilt may involve many—for, that this may justly happen, the threatenings of the law, and the judgments by which they are executed, and the example of Christ, to whom our sins were truly imputed, demonstrate." Here, then, notice, first, in what sense Adam's sin is a *common* sin, viz., in virtue of union with him as our representative and parent; and secondly, that as his guilt involves us, so the guilt of parents involves their children (*when their sins are imputed to them*), and so our guilt involves Christ. Now will not the Spectator frankly admit that the guilt, the demerit, the ill-desert of which Turretin speaks as being transferred—is not moral character or turpitude—but legal responsibility—such as exists between a sponsor and him for whom he acts—a surety and debtor—Christ and his people—an obligation to suffer—a *dignitas poenae* arising out of the legal relations, and not out of the moral character of those concerned? Will they, or *can they*, charge the greatest and holiest men of the church with holding the blasphemous doctrine, that Christ was rendered morally a sinner, by the transfer of our sins?

We should have to go over the whole ground anew, were we to exhibit all the evidence, which we might adduce, to prove that Turretin and old Calvinists generally, do not use the words guilt, demerit, ill-desert in a moral sense. If they do, then they held the transfer of moral character; admit the validity of all the objections of their opponents; acknowledge as true, what they pronounce to be as absurd and impossible, as to be wise with another's wisdom, honest with another's integrity, or comely with another's beauty; they maintain the communication of that which they declare to be "as inseparable and incommunicable as any other attribute of a thing or its essence itself." Into such a maze of endless self-contradiction and absurdity do we necessarily involve them, when we insist on interpreting their language, out of its connection, according to our own preconceived notions—insisting upon it, that because we are accustomed to attach the idea of moral pollution to the words guilt, sinner, demerit, they must have done so too. Accordingly the Protestant has nerve enough to say, for the thousandth time—that all these men are travelling a perpetual round

of self-contradiction—affirming and denying, in rapid succession, precisely the same thing. But what, let us ask, is the use of the “new exegesis” (*sensus communis redivivus*), if all its principles are to be trampled under foot—if a writer, instead of having his language explained agreeably to the *usus loquendi* of his age and school—to his own definitions, explanations, and arguments, and in accordance with his own system and the nature of the subject—is to be made, without the slightest necessity, to use terms in the sense in which we may happen to be accustomed to employ them? What kind of reasoning, for example, is this, To be truly a sinner, is to have a sinful moral character. Turretin says, we are rendered truly sinners by imputation of sin—ergo, Turretin taught that imputation of sin conveys a sinful moral character. Q. E. D.? Or this: To be truly righteous, is to have a righteous moral character (i. e., a moral character conformed to the law). Calvinists say, we are constituted truly righteous by the imputation of righteousness—ergo, imputation conveys moral character. Q. E. D.? Yet here is the concentrated essence of sixty pages of argumentation. And what does it amount to? To a very ingenious specimen of that kind of syllogism in which the major proposition includes a *petitio principii*. In assuming that the terms “sinner” and “righteous” are used in a moral sense, the very thing to be proved is taken for granted. Against this assumption old Calvinists constantly protest, and state with tiresome frequency, that they use these words as they occur in the Bible, in courts of law, and a thousand times in common life, not in a moral, but in a legal or forensic sense; that to be legally a sinner is one thing, and morally so, another—to be legally righteous is one thing, and morally so, another. If our brethren, however, will have it, that because the terms, in their opinion, should always include the idea of moral character, therefore old Calvinists do in fact so employ them, we venture to predict they will stand very much alone in their opinion.\*

\* The passages quoted from Calvin by the Spectator, p. 165, are of a different character, though quite as little to the purpose. When Calvin uses the expression, “*acsi nulla nostra culpa periremus*,” the Spectator understands him as saying that Adam’s sin was properly our sin. They ask, “What then was our sin *in* Adam?” and answer, “They (i. e., old Calvinists) all affirm it was truly sin—as truly so as are any of our personal, i. e., actual transgressions. It is “*nostra culpa*,” “our criminality,” says Calvin.” Now Calvin says no such thing. He does not say that Adam’s sin was our sin: “*Sunt qui contendunt*,” he says, “*nos ita peccato Adæ perditos esse, acsi nulla nostra culpa periremus, ideo tantum quasi ille nobis peccasset*.” “There are some who contend that we are so destroyed by the sin of Adam, as that we perish without any criminality of our own—as though he *only* sinned for us.” These “some” were the Catholic divines with whom he was in constant opposition, who taught that original sin consisted in the imputation of Adam’s sin solely; that there was no depravity of nature. This it is he denies—we do not perish on account of that sin solely, without being personally depraved. This too he thinks the apostle denies when he says, Rom. v. 12, “Since all have sinned” i. e., all are corrupt. “*Istud peccare, est corruptos esse et vitiatos Illa enim naturalis pravitas quam é matris utero afferimus, peccatum est*.” Calvin therefore is speaking of one subject, and the Spectator applies his words to another. We have adverted to this point already, and clearly shown that Calvin taught we are condemned, both *propter peccatum alienum*, and *propter improbitatem*, which is in our own hearts. So in Ezek. xviii. 20, he

But it is high time to draw this article to a close. There are properly two questions involved in this discussion. The one relates to the nature of imputation: Does it include the ideas of literal oneness and transfer of moral character? The other: Supposing these ideas not to belong to the doctrine, how far is there any real difference of opinion between those who hold the doctrine and those who reject it? The Spectator says the difference is merely verbal: we think it real and important. There is, however, a measure of truth in their assertion. For it has happened here, as it is wont to happen in such cases, men often violently denounce a doctrine in one breath, and in the next assert radically the same idea. Thus Bellarmine denies with singular vehemence the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and yet comes out with the doctrine so fully and plainly, that Tuckney affirms, neither Luther nor Calvin could have presented it with more precision and distinctness. And Turretin quotes him as stating the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin, to his entire satisfaction. Such things still happen. We question whether any man, since the days of Augustine, has stated the latter doctrine in stronger terms than Dr. Hopkins, in the passage quoted above; yet he rejects the doctrine. That Adam is our federal head and representative, and his disobedience is our disobedience, he admits, and this is the whole doctrine. So too our New Haven brethren revolt at the idea of representation, and of our being included in the same covenant with Adam, and yet tell us, "Adam was not on trial for himself alone," but also for his posterity. How one man can be on trial for another, without that other standing his probation in him—falling if he fall, and standing if he stand—we cannot conceive, and happily, it is not for us to explain. Though the opposers of such doctrines, driven by the stress of truth, do thus occasionally come out with the admission of what they are denying, still, we cannot thence infer that there is no real difference, even as to these very points, between them and those whom they oppose. We should err very much if we were to conclude from the fact that Bellarmine states so clearly the doctrine of the imputation of righteousness, that he agreed with Luther and Calvin on the subject of justification. The case was far otherwise. He retained his idea of inherent righteousness and moral justification, and sapped the foundation of the cardinal doctrine of the Christian system—justification on the ground of Christ's merits, to the exclusion of everything subjective and personal. And the evils of this theory, notwithstanding his admission, by turning the confidence of men from Christ to themselves, were not the less fatal to truth and holiness. This is no unusual occurrence. It is a common saying, that every Arminian is a Calvinist in prayer, yet we cannot thence infer, he is really a Calvinist in doctrine.

says, "Si quaeratur causa maledictionis, quae incumbit omnibus posteris Adae, dicitur esse *alienum* peccatum, et cujusque proprium." The ground of our condemnation is peccatum alienum, as well as peccatum cujusque proprium. Two sins—imputed and inherent.



Though we are ready to admit, therefore, that at times the Spectator comes near admitting all we ask, there is still, we fear, a *hiatus valde deflendus* which continues to separate us. What the difference is, we distinctly stated in our previous article. They deny the transfer or assumption of legal obligation or responsibility, and therefore maintain that the punishment of one man can never, under any circumstances, come upon another. We use the word *punishment* precisely as they do; it is evil inflicted on a person by a judge in execution of a sentence, and with a view to support the authority of the law. This is the principle which they reject. A principle which, entering, as it does, into the view of original sin as entertained by all the Reformed churches (for all held that the loss of original righteousness and corruption of nature were penal evils), essential as it is to the doctrine of substitution, and, as we think, to all correct views of atonement and justification, we deem of the highest consequence to the cause of evangelical truth and piety. This is a part of the subject on which we have not time to enter, and which is entirely distinct from the task which we originally assumed; which was to vindicate ourselves from the charge of having abandoned the common Calvinistic doctrine of imputation, by proving that the doctrine was held by old Calvinists precisely as we have presented it. If after this proof and this exhibition, our New Haven brethren can intelligently say they agree with us, we shall heartily rejoice.

## ESSAY VIII.

# THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTATION.\*

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JOSHUA PLACAEUS, Professor of Theology in the celebrated school at Saumur, published, towards the middle of the seventeenth century, the doctrine, that original sin consists merely in the hereditary corruption of our nature, without any direct imputation of the first sin of Adam to his posterity. The case was brought before the National Synod of the French Reformed Churches, which met at Charenton, near Paris, in 1645. The name of Placaëus was not mentioned, but the doctrine which he taught was examined and condemned. The decree of the Synod was as follows:—

“Whereas a report has been made to the Synod of certain writings, printed and manuscript, by which the nature of original sin is made to consist solely in the hereditary corruption, originally residing in all men, but the imputation of the first sin of Adam is denied; the Synod condemns the aforesaid doctrine, so far as it restricts the nature of original sin to the mere hereditary corruption of Adam’s posterity, excluding the imputation of the first sin by which he fell; and, under the penalty of censures of all kinds, forbids all pastors, professors, and others, who may treat this subject, to depart from the common opinion of all Protestant churches, which, besides corruption, have always acknowledged the aforesaid imputation to the whole posterity of Adam. And (the National Synod) commands all synods and classes, in taking steps for the reception of students into the sacred ministry, to require of them subscription to this statute.”—(Act. Syn. Char., c. 19, art. 1.)

Placaëus now contended that he was not touched by this decree, because, he said, he did not absolutely deny imputation of every kind, but only that which was immediate and antecedent. He invented a distinction between *mediate* and *immediate* imputation; immediate imputation being that which, in the order of nature, precedes inherent corruption; mediate imputation that which, in the order of nature, is consequent and dependent on corruption.

Placaëus, though an able man and learned theologian, had, at

\* Published in 1839, with some reference to the following work:—

“*Decretum Synodi Nationalis Ecclesiarum Reformatarum Galliae initio Anni 1645, de imputatione primi peccati omnibus Adami posteris, cum Ecclesiarum et Doctorum Protestantium consensu, ex scriptis eorum, ab Andrea Riveto collecto.*”

that time, few followers. His doctrine was repudiated by the Protestant theologians of the day, with almost unanimous consent. Nevertheless, many treatises were written, to refute this new form of error. And as he claimed some of the earlier divines, and even the reformers, as agreeing with him, Andrew Rivet, the greatest theologian of the age, to show that such pretensions were unfounded, and to vindicate the decree of the synod, which declared that the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity was the doctrine of all the Protestant churches, undertook the labour of collecting testimonies from the formulas of churches, and the writings of the most distinguished theologians on the subject. As these testimonies are highly interesting at the present time, and as the volume which contains them is accessible to few, we propose to lay some of them before our readers, in a literal translation. In making the selection, we shall omit some testimonies, which, however clear and satisfactory as to the question in dispute, have now less interest than they had at first, because the writers are at present little known. The churches or theologians bearing testimony, will be indicated by the titles of the paragraphs.

First Helvetic Confession, 1538.

Since man was made holy by God, and fell into sin by his own fault, he drew with himself into the same ruin the human race, and rendered them obnoxious to the same calamity. And this defilement, which is called original, has so pervaded the whole race, that the child of wrath and enemy of God can be cured by no help but that of God through Christ.

Latter Helvetic Confession, 1566.

Such as Adam became after the fall, such are all those descended from him; that is to say, they are equally obnoxious to sin, death, and all sorts of calamities.

Confession of Basle.

We acknowledge that man was originally created in the image of God, in righteousness and holiness; but that of his own accord he fell into sin: BY WHICH FALL the whole human race was rendered corrupt, and made obnoxious to condemnation.

Confession of the Bohemians or Waldenses.

The FIRST, the greatest, and most grievous of all sins, was undoubtedly the sin of Adam, which the Apostle calls "the disobedience;" by which death reigns over all, even over those who did not sin by a transgression of the same kind as that of Adam. The second sin is the sin of our origin, which is innate and hereditary. The virulence of this hereditary pollution may be ascertained and estimated from its guilt and blameworthiness.—(De reatu et culpa.)



## French Confession.

We believe that the whole offspring of Adam was infected with this contagion which we call original sin ; namely, a fault flowing from our propagation, &c. Let it suffice (to observe) that those things with which Adam was endowed, were not given TO HIMSELF ALONE, but to his posterity also.

## Articles of the Church of England.

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam ; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil ; so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit ; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation ; and this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated, &c.

## Old Scottish Confession.

By the transgression of Adam, which is commonly called "original sin," the image of God in man is altogether defaced, and he and his posterity are by nature the enemies of God, bond-slaves of Satan, and the servants of sin ; and so we, IN HIS PERSON, were despoiled of all those gifts, and fell into all this misery and curse. *These things cannot be said without imputation. Haec sine imputatione dici non possunt.*

## Belgic Confession.

We believe, that by the disobedience of Adam, the sin which is called original, is spread and diffused through the whole human race : but original sin is the corruption and hereditary vice of our whole nature, by which infants themselves, in the womb of their mother, are polluted : and which, as some noxious root, germinates every kind of sin in man.—(Art. 15.)

## Saxon Confession.

Original sin exists ; and on account of the fall of our first parents, and in consequence of the depravation which followed their fall, they that are born are liable to the wrath of God, and deserving eternal damnation, unless remission be obtained through the Mediator.—(Art. ii.)

## Augsburg Confession.

The doctrine is, that after the fall of Adam, all men, propagated in a natural way, have original sin. But we understand that *original sin* (as it is called by the holy fathers, and all the orthodox and pious men of learning in the church) consists of the guilt in which we are involved by the fall of Adam, and by which we are

exposed to the wrath of God and eternal death; and that corruption of human nature propagated from Adam.—(Art. ii.)

Articles of Smalcald, written by Martin Luther

Here, it must be confessed by us, that Paul, in the 5th of the Romans, affirms that sin sprang from one man, Adam, and entered into the world, by whose disobedience all men were made sinners, subjected to death and the devil. This is called original, hereditary, principal, or radical sin.

Confession of Wittenberg.

We believe and confess that man was by God made just and wise originally, endowed with free will, and adorned by the Holy Spirit; but afterwards, in consequence of disobedience, was deprived of the Holy Spirit, made the slave of Satan, and rendered obnoxious to corporeal, as well as eternal damnation; and this evil not only seized upon Adam, but was propagated to all his posterity.

To these citations we may add, that the theologians who met at Marpurg, to endeavour to settle the differences between the Lutherans and Zwinglians, about the presence of Christ in the sacrament, though unable to agree on this point, nevertheless drew up and subscribed a doctrinal confession, one article of which related to original sin, and is as follows: "In the fourth place, we believe that original sin is innate in us, and was propagated to us from Adam; and it is such a sin that it exposes all men to condemnation; so that unless Jesus Christ had interposed for us by his death and life, all men on account of original sin would have been condemned; nor could they have come into the kingdom of God, and to eternal happiness." These articles were subscribed by Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, Osiander, Brentius, Agricola, Œcolampadius, Zwingle, Bucer and Hedio.

Rivet then gives the testimonies and explanations of certain theologians, from different countries, who had subscribed the confessions before cited, beginning with those of Switzerland.

Wolfgang Musculus.

Let no one here allege, that as the universality expressed in the latter clause is restricted to the elect only, when it is said that the free gift came upon all men to justification of life; so in the former clause, when it is said, the condemnation comes upon all men, it may be referred to the reprobate only; for the comparison instituted between Adam and Christ will not admit of it, since according to this the evil propagated from Adam is *IMPUTED* to all those descended from him; and in like manner the good to all those who are justified by Christ.—(Loc. Comm. cap. de Electione.)

Again, more expressly, in his exposition of Rom. v. 12:—"Some expound the words *have sinned* (*ἡμαρτον*) on account of sin are con-

demned, or virtually are constituted sinners ; which, indeed, is true ; but there is no reason why you should not understand by it, the actual sin of Adam, in whom all that existed in his loins have sinned. For since we receive from Christ not only this benefit that we should be virtually justified by his obedience ; but this also, that by the very actual obedience of Christ, we obey the Father, as we are Christ's ; so we are not only virtually made sinners in Adam, but are condemned for this very sin of Adam. Whence the apostle declares, that by the offence of one, or the *one offence*, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.—(Comm. on Romans, ch. 5.)

Peter Viret, Pastor at Lausanne.

God permitted the fall and corruption of the whole human race, and of the whole nature of man, in the man first formed. (Instit. Christ., Dial. 1.)

Amandus Polanus, Professor at Basle.

The parts of original sin are two, “ the crime of disobedience, or defection from God, while in the loins of Adam ; and the corruption consequent upon the lapse of Adam, in the whole human nature. The fault of disobedience or defection from God while in the loins of Adam,” is the first part of original sin, which is iniquity, or a stain from a blot contracted from that first sin, namely, a privation of the due honour which should be present, of the nature of a bond obliging to punishment, and binding us in punishment. So that the sin was not that of Adam alone, but also ours, because not only did Adam sin, but we also, as in Adam the root of the whole human race sinned, and transgressed the law. Rom. v. 5, 12, 19.—(Syn-tag. Theol., lib. vi., cap. 3.)

Although after the fall, Adam committed other sins, yet none of them are imputed, but only the first, by which corruption and death were spread through all human nature, and were decreed upon us. This Paul teaches, Rom. v. 12. “ By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,” where he speaks of sin in the singular number, not of *sins*. So also, in the 16th verse, guilt (judgment) was of *one offence* unto condemnation. And in ver. 17, “ By one offence, death reigned by one,” and in the 18th v., “ By one offence guilt (judgment) came upon all men to condemnation.”—(Ibid.)

Henry Bullinger, Pastor and Professor at Zurich.

Sin is called original, or the sin of our birth, because it comes from our first origin, or is derived from our first parent upon all, by propagation or traduction. It derives its origin from the first formed man, and hence it is termed, the hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature. Moreover, this evil flowed from our first parents to all their posterity.—(Decad. III., Sermon. 10.)

After men became obnoxious to punishment, so far were we from having any power by which we could deliver ourselves, that, by



reason of our native and inherent depravity, we rather increase the same.—(Compend. Relig. Christ., v. 5.)

Peter Martyr, Professor at Zurich.

After discussing the import of the phrase  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\omega}$ , in the person of Photius, maintaining the Latin interpretation *in whom*, that is, *in Adam all have sinned*, he proceeds to observe:—But I am not disposed keenly to contend for this interpretation, for I admit that  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\omega}$  is a causal particle, so that the sense may be, that death has passed upon all men *because that all have sinned*. For Chrysostom says, by the fall of Adam, Paul has determined that other mortals who did not eat of the tree are infected; and as a prudent physician, when about to administer for a particular disease, does not delay in the mere circumstances or sequences, but has recourse to the head and primary cause: thus, *all die because all sinned*. Nor should we in this place take the word *sinned* in such a sense as would render it inapplicable to infants; but as though he had said, they are held in sin and are esteemed guilty (*Rei*), for he was able from explanations given in the Epist. to Hebrews, to declare, “HOW WE SINNED IN THE FALL OF ADAM;” for there we read that Levi paid tithes while in the loins of Abraham. By the same reason it may here be understood that we were contaminated in the loins, in the mass of Adam (Comm. on Rom., ch. v.). A little after, he says, “*For as by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world,*” the apostle declares what sin it was, which by one man entered into the world, and by which death passed upon all men: it was the disobedience of the first man, which he signifies was communicated to all, when he says, “by it many were constituted sinners.” (Ib.)

Original sin is a depravation of the whole nature of man, derived from the fall of our first parents to their posterity by generation; which, unless the benefit of Christ’s mediation prevents, will subject all who are born into the world, to infinite evils and to eternal damnation.—(Ib.)

The efficient cause is the sinning will of Adam. When, therefore, he seems to assert that the sin for which we are condemned is not another’s, but our own, he means that the sin of Adam was not so the sin of another but that it was ours also; besides, he had respect to that error of Pighius, that original sin consists in nothing else but the imputation of Adam’s sin; for he did not acknowledge innate depravity, or denied that it partook of the nature of sin.—(Ibid.)

In the fifth chapter of Romans it is written, “*In whom all sinned;*” which refers to Adam: for these words,  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\omega}$ , cannot refer to the word sin, for according to the syntax of the Greek language, the pronoun in that case must have been in the feminine gender, and the apostle should have said  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\eta}$ ; the true sense then is that we sinned in the fall of Adam. And we have the same mode of speaking in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he declares that Levi paid

tithes while yet in the loins of Abraham, who, according to the genealogy, was the fourth from him in the line of descent. Now, as it is said that while in the loins of Abraham he paid tithes to Melchisedek ; by the same reason all men were contained in Adam when he sinned, &c.—(Comm. on 1 Cor., ch. xv.)

Stephen Fabritius, of Berne.

Since Adam representatively bore the person of the whole human race, whatever of good or evil he received of God, he received for himself and for others.—1 Cor. xv. 22. Besides, when Adam sinned, his posterity were in his loins, and to be propagated from him by the laws of nature, and thus they inherit guilt from him. Heb. vii. 9.—(Concion. in Psalm li.)

John Wollebius, Professor at Basle.

The proximate cause of original sin is the guilt of the first sin, in regard to which the punishment of God is most just ; namely, a part of that death which God threatened to man.

Although the soul of man is immediately breathed into us by God ; yet united to the body it is truly guilty of the first sin which is imputed to the whole man, and so it is infected with that original stain.—(Christ. Theol., lib. i., cap 10.)

John Calvin.

Although Calvin dwells chiefly on the description and proof of the natural corruption of all men, he shows also that this was the punishment of the first sin. “After the divine image was obliterated, he did not bear this punishment alone ; as in the place of wisdom, virtue, sanctity, truth, justice (in which ornaments he had been clothed), the basest plagues succeeded, blindness, impotency, impurity, &c. ; but he also involved and immersed his posterity in the same miseries. This is that hereditary corruption which the ancients called original sin ; understanding by the word sin, the depravation of a nature before good and pure. Concerning which thing there was much contention among them, for nothing can be more remote from common sense than that ALL SHOULD BECOME GUILTY BY THE SIN OF ONE. *That certainly cannot be done without the imputation of that one sin.*—(Inst., lib. ii., cap. 1.)

And again, so undoubtedly it must be held, that Adam was not only the progenitor of human nature, but, as it were, the RADIX ; and so, in his deserved corruption, the race of man was vitiated.—(Ib., 66.)

The words are not obscure, that by the obedience of Christ many are justified, so by the disobedience of Adam many were constituted sinners. Therefore, between these two, this is the relation, that the one destroyed us, involving us in his own ruin with himself ; the other restores us by his grace to salvation.—(Ibid.)

It is not lawful to interpret otherwise what is said, “that in Adam

all die," than that he by sinning brought so great destruction and ruin, not only upon himself, but precipitated our nature also into the same destruction.—(Ib.)

With this we should be content, that whatever endowments the Lord was pleased to bestow upon human nature, were deposited with Adam, so that when he lost what he had received, the loss was not his only, but that of us all.—(Ib.)

Nor did it happen merely in a natural way, that all should fall by the sin of one parent: the scriptures openly declare, that all men were bound over to eternal death in the person of this one man.—(Lib. iii., cap. 23, sect. 7.)

Adam, the common father of all, by his rebellion alienated himself from God; and the fountain of life and all good being forsaken, he rendered himself obnoxious to all miseries. Whence it comes to pass that every one of us is born infected with original sin, and from the very womb of our mother we are under the curse of God, and condemned not only on account of the crime of another, but on account of the depravity which is then within us, though it does not yet appear.—(Confession of Faith.)

In regard to man, we perceive, in passing over the scriptures, that the thing is thus: that the whole human race has become corrupt by the fall of Adam, so that we have all become obnoxious to destruction and damnation, not only because Adam himself sinned, but because we ourselves are sinners from the womb.—(Confession of the French churches, submitted to the Diet at Frankfort.)

But if it is proposed by you to subject God to the laws of nature, will you condemn him for injustice, because for the sin of one man we are all held implicated in the guilt of eternal death? One sinned; all are led to punishment; nor is that all, but from the sin of this one, all have contracted contagion; so that they are born corrupt, and infected with a death-bringing pollution.—(Reply to one of his Calumniators.)

It should be remarked how God, in the person of Adam, created the whole human race after his own image: so Adam, by sin, was not only despoiled of the gifts conferred, but was banished from God; and in consequence all his posterity. How was this? Because according to the will of God we were all included in his person.—(Comm. on Job, ch. xiv.)

It is worthy of remark, that there are two differences between Christ and Adam, concerning which the apostle was silent, not because he thought they might be neglected, but because it did not pertain to his present argument to enumerate them. The first is, that by the sin of Adam we are not condemned BY IMPUTATION ALONE, as though the punishment of another's sin was exacted of us; but we so bear his punishment because we also are guilty of his fault; for because our nature was vitiated in him, it is with God bound by the guilt of iniquity. Here then we have the two things, *not only the imputation of the first sin; but also our own fault, since our nature is corrupted.*—(Comm. on Rom. v. 17.)



Theodore Beza.

Two things should be considered in original sin, namely, guilt and corruption; which, although they cannot be separated, yet ought to be distinguished accurately. For as Adam, by the commission of sin, first was made GUILTY of the wrath of God, then as being guilty, he underwent as the punishment of his sin, the corruption of soul and body. So also he transmitted to posterity a nature, in the first place GUILTY, next, corrupted. Concerning the propagation of guilt, the apostle is properly treating in this passage, in contrast with which the IMPUTATION of the obedience of Christ is set forth. *Hence it follows, that that guilt which precedes corruption, is by the imputation of Adam's disobedience; as the remission of sins and the abolition of guilt, is by the imputation of the obedience of Christ. Nothing can be plainer.*—(Note on Rom. v. 12.)

Lambert Danaeus Aurelius, S. Theol. D. and Professor in the Academy of Geneva, Leyden, &c.

Original sin flows from parents to their children by the ordination of God, constituting and placing Adam for the whole human species, as he constituted and substituted Christ as the second Adam for all the elect. "That first sin rendered them GUILTY before God, then the corruption (which followed guilt in Adam) was transferred into us; on the account of this inhering in us we are now guilty, as infected with our own depravity—vile, and spotted, and hateful to God, NOT ONLY IN ADAM, or as we are viewed in him as the fountain and root of the human race, but as we are considered in ourselves and from ourselves corrupted."

Again. The guilt and punishment of the sin of Adam have passed upon all the posterity of Adam and Eve, Christ excepted.

All men, the posterity of Adam, are BY NATURE GUILTY before God, involved in that sin, and are children of wrath. Hence, both in mind and body we bear the punishment which we before described; for the opinion is false, that punishment alone flowed to us on account of this sin, and not the GUILT and fault, for in that case we should be punished as undeserving; but first the sin, then the punishment passes over and is laid upon us. Therefore, by one man sin entered into the world, that is guilt, and that indeed first in order, and by sin, death; and so the penalty, both in soul and body, afterwards pervaded all men also. For in one Adam they sinned and are constituted guilty before God. But why was this? Because Adam not only was the propagator, but also the fountain and root of the whole human race, from which the pollution and vitiosity descended, as into the branches propagated from this root, not only by imitation but by the actual communication of the first sin, first of the fault (culpa) then of the corruption and vitiosity both in mind and body.

Original sin then does not consist merely in imitation, nor solely IN IMPUTATION, but in inhesion, propagation, communication, and installation of that corruption and depravity which Adam himself

had contracted. And the same descends to us, and dwells in us. Therefore, when he sinned, Adam instilled his pollution into us all. (*Apologia pro Justif. per imputationem.*)

There are three things which constitute a man guilty before God. 1. The sin flowing from this that we have all sinned in the first man, Rom. v. 12. 2. Corruption, which is the punishment of this sin, which fell upon Adam and all his posterity, Heb. ix. 27. 3. The (actual) sins which adult men commit, and which are fruits which this root of corruption brings forth, of which we are guilty before the judgment of God.

Anthony Fay, Pastor and Professor at Geneva.

All sinned in Adam, and by the sin of Adam death passed on all men, because that sin had passed unto all. We sinned in him sinning; we died in his dying. *Eφ' ᾧ* Theodoret takes as a causal particle, as if a reason should be rendered why death has passed upon all. Chrysostom understands *ἐφ'* ᾧ in the same sense, namely, that all had become sinners; but it is better to take the preposition *ἐφ'* for *ἐν* as in Heb. ix. 10, so that it may be interpreted to relate to Adam, whose sin was common to all, as the penalty or death is common to all.—(On Rom. v. 12.)

We believe that the sin of Adam, whilst it was the act of an individual, was common to the whole species, inasmuch as Adam was not made a private person, but was constituted by God the fountain of the whole race. For the human race lying hid in the loins of Adam, was adorned by God with original righteousness and grace; but by the sin of Adam was despoiled of both. For as a murder perpetrated by the hand is not imputed to the hand only, but to the whole body, not to Adam alone, who was but a member of the body of men, but to the whole race of men; therefore it is not of another's sin that we are reckoned guilty, but of our own; since in Adam we all eat of the forbidden fruit.—(Enchirid. Theologic., disp. 37, thes. 15—18.)

A double disease pervaded the whole human race by the sin of Adam. The first is GUILT, by which all men are subjected to eternal death; the other is the corruption of the whole man and of all his faculties of mind and body: by reason of which he is neither willing nor able to be subject to the divine law.—(Disp. 60, thes. 13.)

John Deodati, Professor and Pastor at Geneva.

This is the general conclusion of the preceding treatise concerning justification by faith, in which the apostle, after briefly repeating what had been said, at the same time declares their foundation, namely, that God out of his own good pleasure had constituted Christ the head of grace and fountain of righteousness and life to all his elect, by the imputation of whose righteousness they return into favour with God, and consequently are sanctified and glorified. For as Adam was constituted the head and root of the whole hu-

man race, so that by THE IMPUTATION of his sin to all his posterity, they became obnoxious to the divine curse, are deprived of original righteousness, corrupted in their whole nature, and liable to death.—(On Rom. v. 12.)

Benedict Turretin, Pastor and Professor at Geneva.

OUR CONFESSIONS include under original sin, the communion which we have in the first sin, and the loss of original righteousness and purity which we have sustained, and the inherent corruption of the soul.—(On Rom. v. 12.)

Chrysostom, who well understood the import of the Greek word (*κατασθιγισσονται*), explains it. by the fault and guilt into which we have fallen in Adam; by this first sin having become guilty in the judgment of God.—(On Rom. v. 18.)

Philip Mornay, Professor at Saumur.

We know whence proceeded the corruption of the human race, namely, from our grievous sin and the punishment which followed it. We were all in the first man when he sinned.—(De Veritat. Relig. Christ., cap. 16, 17.)

Since the whole human race was lost in Adam, and every one in himself, God so loved the world that he gave the son of his love as a price of redemption *for the sins of all those whom out of mere grace he gave to believe on him.*—(In his Will.)

Francis Junius, Professor at Heidelberg and Leyden.

In the first Adam the whole species was, by God, naturally deposited; in whom all sinned, and became guilty, and the children of wrath, and of an eternal malediction.—(De Pecc. Orig., thes. 4.)

The efficient cause is Adam and Eve, our first parents; for since Adam was constituted by God the instrumental principle in nature, of the whole human race, and indeed a voluntary instrument, it is necessary to suppose that this evil was effected by God, by nature, or by this particular instrument: not by God, who left the voluntary instrument to pursue his own course, and taught him what was right; not from nature, which is the subject of the voluntary instrument, but does not govern it; then it must proceed from the instrumental principle.—(Ib., thes. 6.)

God, as in the order of his creation, placed the whole human race in Adam by nature; so, in the dispensation of his righteousness, he said to the whole human race in Adam, IN WHOM we have sinned, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die."—(Ib., thes. 7.)

They who pronounce that sin to be simply involuntary, are very much deceived, since the same thing may be said to be voluntary and involuntary in different respects, whether you respect its generation or its constitution; for the whole race was voluntary in sinning in Adam (although in respect to its particular origin it was



to us involuntary), in whom we have a common origin, and as it proceeds from the fault of our nature it is voluntary, though not by a particular act of the will of each individual.—(Ib., thes. 8.)

Hence it comes to pass (namely, by the transgression of Adam), that all of us who are born bear the stigma and brand of our rebellion; so that before we enjoy the light we partake of the injury of our origin. For, indeed, we all sinned in him in whom we ALL WERE ONE MAN.—(Ib., thes. 2.)

Our nature was deprived of the gift of righteousness in Adam; and the nature of Adam having become destitute, makes all persons procreated from it subject to the same destitution, sinners and unrighteous; and so the personal sin of Adam has passed upon all, who according to nature are personally propagated from him.—(Ib., thes. 8.)

Εφ' ᾧ should be interpreted IN WHOM, namely, Adam. In this chapter the apostle openly declares that all have sinned in Adam; that by the fall of one, Adam, many are become dead; that GUILT is from one offence to condemnation; by one offence death reigned; by one man—by one offence guilt came upon all men to condemnation—and finally, by the disobedience of one man many were constituted sinners.—(De Nat. and Grat. rat., 71.)

Peter Molinaeus, Professor at Sedan.

In this argument the declaration of the apostle is most express, where he says, “by one man,” &c. Yea, infants he subjects in a peculiar manner to this necessity, saying, “*death reigned over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,*” that is, who had not sinned actually, but only originally. And lest any should refer to this imputation alone, in the 7th chapter he confesses his own proclivity to sinning. (Molinaeus denies, indeed, that imputation is ALONE, but acknowledges and proves that this is joined with corruption, which the synod also does.) “We,” says he, “sinned in Adam, and in him willed this depravation.”

“Nor indeed would God impute the sin of Adam to his posterity, unless they had in themselves something which was truly of the nature of sin, and unless they were evil by nature.”

It is evident that he acknowledges imputation, with inherent depravity conjoined; but in his ANATOMY OF ARMINIANISM, he asserts the doctrine of imputation, professedly, and spends one whole chapter in its defence.

Daniel Chamier, Professor of Theology at Montauban.

After bringing forward the various opinions of the Papists, he reduces them all to two. First, those of the Catholics who agree with the Reformed on this point. Second, those who acknowledge nothing inherent which can be called sin. In the first class he places Bellarmin, Peltanus, Delphinus, Alvaresius, Vasquez, &c. Against these he alleges nothing which need be made a subject of

controversy. He then proceeds to dispute against those who made original sin to consist altogether in the imputation of the first sin ; but his arguments do not strike those, such as Bellarmin, who join depravity proceeding from the first man, to the imputation of his sin.

“For Bellarmin,” says he, “considers in sin, the act itself, and that which from the act *formally* remains in the soul ; and these two things may be distinguished, as heat, and causing heat. In Adam both really existed ; in us, not the act of Adam, except by imputation, but the quality from the act really. Wherefore, in the first sense, original sin is the first transgression of Adam, committed by him, as representing the whole human race, in whom all sinned. But in the second sense, it is the destitution of original righteousness, with an habitual aversion to God, and perverseness of will, resulting in a peculiar manner from the actual disobedience of the first parent.”—(Panstratria, Fam iii., lib. i., c. 2, sect. 9.)

“We grant that by the disobedience of Adam, all were truly and in fact rendered unrighteous by inherent depravity ; but that the unrighteousness of Adam was NOT IMPUTED we declare to be false. On the contrary, we deny that we could be made inherently unrighteous by one man, *unless the unrighteousness of this one man were imputed to us*. Wherefore it is false THAT THE DISOBEDIENCE OF ADAM WAS NOT IMPUTED TO US.”—(Ib., lib. xxi., c. 2, sec. 9.)

Again. “We grant that the disobedience of Adam and the obedience of Christ do efficiently and meritoriously constitute us unrighteous and righteous ; for this we never denied ; for we deny that they could render us righteous or unrighteous, *UNLESS THEY WERE FIRST IMPUTED*, for if not imputed, in no way are they ours ; for they are the acts of individuals, and therefore personal. But for personal acts to be common to others, is absurd and contradictory. Therefore it behoves that *THEY SHOULD BE IMPUTED*. For this kind of communication is no how inconsistent with the proper personality of acts ; it proceeds on an entirely different principle. Therefore the very sin of Adam, I say his own personal disobedience, *MUST BE IMPUTED TO HIS POSTERITY*. And so also in regard to the obedience of Christ : because the whole human race was considered as in Adam by nature ; and because the whole multitude of believers were in Christ, by grace. Hence it comes to pass that we are not only made sinners by Adam, but are declared to *HAVE SINNED IN HIM*, which is a very different thing.”

I say then that it is certain that all men are *really* constituted unrighteous by Adam, and that all believers are *really* constituted righteous by Christ. But I deny that that is the point which the apostle had under consideration ; for his inquiry here is into the grounds of our condemnation and justification ; for although he considers *κατάκριμα* as in Adam, yet not peculiar to him, but pertaining to the whole human race ; for the meaning is, then, when Adam sinned, the whole human race was condemned, or made *GUILTY* of disobedience to God ; whence also this by Augustine was called

original sin, the punishment of the first sin; but how could it be punishment, unless that very first sin were imputed?

John Mistrezatius, Pastor of the Church at Paris.

It is necessary that that which is past should become ours by imputation only, but that which resides in another, should be derived to us by inheritance. For as Cardinal Bellarmin very well says, concerning the act of sin committed by Adam; "It is communicated to us in the only way in which a thing past can be, namely BY IMPUTATION." So the obedience of the second Adam, as it has been past now more than sixteen hundred years, is communicated to us by imputation. But in regard to his spirit, it flows into us by regeneration, just as the inherent corruption of Adam is derived to us by natural generation.—(Haec Ille, p. 37.)

If the doctors of the Roman church agree that the disobedience of Adam is imputed to us, because he was considered the head of his posterity, with what reason can they deny that the obedience of the second Adam is imputed to us? But you will say, the corruption of Adam has descended to us really, and inheres in us. So it does; but I say that the imputation of his disobedience precedes, and corruption is derived to us by generation, because we sinned in Adam as in our head; God abandoning the posterity of Adam to the corruption of their father, on account of his sin.—(Ib., p. 43.)

Charles Drelincourt, Pastor of the Church at Paris.

As the sin of Adam is imputed to us because we all sinned in Adam, so in like manner the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, since in the person of Christ, our head, we have fulfilled all righteousness.—(On Rom. v. 19.)

John Sharp Sestus, S. T. Professor.

Original sin is two-fold, imputed and inherent. Imputed sin is the defection of Adam, which imputed to all his posterity that were in his loins; which sin was actually in Adam, but only in us by imputation. It is imputed to us because we were in Adam, as in our root and stock.—(Theol. Comm., Loc. xi., De Peccato.)

Again, concerning justification:—

It is objected, that it is absurd to say that any one can be righteous, with a righteousness without him; for this would be the same as if I should say that the wall is white by the whiteness which is not its own. To which I answer: In things strictly of a personal nature, no one can be denominated, except the person in whom the thing exists; but in regard to the righteousness of Christ it is otherwise, because it is not personally peculiar to Christ, but, by the covenant of grace, is communicated to all believers; for as the sin of Adam was not personal, but imputed to every individual of the whole human race; so also the righteousness of Christ.



John Dartesius.

By one man, namely Adam, sin entered into the world, by imputation and propagation: therefore in the same manner the thing takes place with us, in regard to the righteousness of Christ.—(*Clavis Praedestinationis*, part i., c. 5.)

John Crayus Occitanus, Pastor.

Adam was a public person, representing the whole of his posterity, and he sinned, not only for himself, but for all men descending from him. As the descendants who were yet to descend from Abraham, paid tithes in the person of their father, who afterwards received tithes from their brethren, as the apostle teaches us, Heb. vii. 7—9, so also men, who by natural generation from Adam have their descent, become guilty, and are condemned to undergo punishment on account of the action of their parent, in whose loins they at the time existed; for his fall was the fall of the whole human race, who in the loss sustained by their first parent, lost all their riches, with which it behoved them to be endowed. “By one offence many were constituted sinners.”—Rom. v. 19. [From these things the imputation of the first sin may manifestly be inferred.]—(On the 10th article of the Confession of the Gallican church.)

There is no Christian who does not confess that the rebellion of Adam was imputed to his posterity, but if any one can be found bold enough to make such a denial, he will be compelled to acknowledge it from the words of Paul. For truly guilt could not come upon all men to condemnation by one sin, unless by the imputation of that sin. And death could not have reigned over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, unless by the imputation of the sin of our first parent.—(On the 18th article of the Confession.)

John Chenet, V. D. M.

Although actually and in very fact we did not eat the forbidden fruit, as did Adam, nevertheless we all sinned in Adam, Rom. v. 12. And, as Augustine teaches, Epist. xxiii., to Boniface, we subsequently contracted from him an obligation to punishment, since we were one with Adam when he sinned.—(Exam. of the Principal Art. of Religion, lib. xi., c. 28.)

Original sin is the imputation of the transgression of Adam, and then a real vitiosity, as well of body as mind, which we have received from Adam.

*Quest.* Why do you extend this sin to the imputation of the transgression of Adam?

*Ans.* Because as we are not otherwise reformed and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, but as we are pardoned and justified by the gratuitous imputation of the merit of Christ; so original sin does not consist merely in that depravity which is the opposite of that

renovation which is by the Holy Spirit, but also in the imputation of the sin of Adam, which is the opposite to the payment made by Christ, and to his perfect obedience for us, even to the death of the cross.—(Exam. of the Principal Art. of Religion, chap. 21.)

Abraham Collignon, V. D. M.

*Quest.* Why, on account of the sin of Adam, do all his posterity lie in a state of misery?

*Ans.* Because Adam represented the whole human race: for, as the promises of good made to him would not only have been fulfilled to him, but to his posterity, if he had continued in obedience; so in like manner the threatenings of evil came upon them as well as on him.—(Institutes of the Principal Articles of Faith, sec. iii.)

{Paul Ferrius, Pastor.

All we were in the loins of Adam, and sinned in him and with him.—(Orthodox. Specimina.)

Daniel Tilenus, Prof. Sedan., Disp. xv.

Original sin is that hereditary corruption of human nature, by which all who by natural generation are propagated from Adam, are infected; and so in the loins of this first parent, *they sinned together with him*, and incurred the guilt of both temporal and eternal punishment.

William Whittaker, Doctor and Professor of Theology in the University of Cambridge.

[Wm. Whittaker wrote a particular tract on Original Sin, against Stapleton and other papists; in the first book of which he treats of the first sin of Adam.]

“Although,” says he, “that act was of Adam alone, nor could inhere in his posterity or in Adam himself, yet BY IMPUTATION it is the act of all of us. But does the word IMPUTATION, in this case, give offence? Then hear what LYRA, on the fifth chapter of the Romans, says; ‘The sin of Adam is imputed to all descending from him, according to the law of generation; for they are his members, whence this is called *original sin*.’ But if you think that this testimony is out of date, I will refer you to two of the firmest pillars of the Roman church, Cajetan and Bellarmin. Cajetan, on this passage, says, ‘The punishment of death on account of it is inflicted on all his posterity; and it is proved that the sin is imputed to him and all his posterity, because the punishment of it is endured by them all.’ So Bellarmin, tom iii., lib. v., c. 17.—‘Adam alone committed that by his actual volition; but it is communicated to us by generation, in the only way in which it can be transmitted, namely, by imputation.’”

Original sin is inherent and native depravity, but the actual and

free transgression of Adam is imputed to us. For we should neither be held under the guilt or depravity thence contracted, unless that act by which Adam violated the divine precept was ascribed to us by IMPUTATION. But in regard that some scholastic theologians place original sin in imputation ALONE ; in this they basely and nefariously err.

John Junius, Preacher at Delft.

In the sum of the matter, all the Reformed churches agree, and teach with unanimous consent, in accordance with the sacred scriptures and the universal agreement of antiquity ; first, that the sin of Adam was not a personal sin, but of the whole human race, inasmuch as they were all included in the loins of Adam, and in Adam, the first parent of us all and root of the whole human race, they sinned. Secondly, there was transfused a principle contrary to original righteousness, contracted from Adam in the first transient act of his sin, and propagated by means of generation to all his posterity ; so that all men by nature are guilty of death, and averse from the love which they owe to God and divine things, and turned or inclined to evil.—(*Antapologia Posthuma*, c. vii., p. 152.

G. S. Frisius.

Nor is it merely the IMPUTATION of the sin of another, as if all on account of the first sin of their parents were only made obnoxious to death ; as if this evil would not have the nature of their own proper sin, unless their consent was added ; but it is the real sin of the whole human race, through the fall of Adam, IN WHOM all have sinned, Rom. v. 12, and are all by nature under an obligation, from the just judgment of God, to endure the punishment of eternal death.

Again, as from the merit of Christ a double benefit is decreed to us, the imputation of gratuitous righteousness, and the regeneration of our corrupt nature, so a double evil has been transmitted to us from the sin of Adam, namely, GUILT, on account of the sin committed by him and IN HIM (Rom v. 12), and the depravation of nature, propagated from him to us. The individual person of Adam is not here considered, but the nature common to all his posterity, in respect to which all are propagated from him corrupt, as being members of the one same nature.—(*De Peccato Originali*.)

John G. Vossius.

There are two questions ; whether the sin of our first parents was imputed to all their posterity, and how far imputed. The Catholic church has once judged that that first sin is imputed to all ; that is, by the just judgment of God, all its effects are transmitted to all the children of Adam ; but these effects were believed to be, that we are born destitute of original righteousness, subject



to the necessity of death, and liable to an eternal separation from God.—(Hist. Pol., lib. ii., p. 1.) The above he confirms by many testimonies from the sacred scriptures, and from the ancients.

J. Lorentius.

The true and genuine exposition of these words is, that all men sinned in Adam, as in their common stock and mass, and so in him and by him. It is altogether a different thing to sin in Adam, and to derive sin from him. And we should carefully distinguish the sin which all committed in Adam, from original sin; namely, as the cause from the effect. For all sinned in Adam at the time that he sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, as then naturally existing in his loins. This first sin of Adam is the cause of original sin, which is the effect; therefore it is falsely asserted by Catharinus and Pighius, "That original sin is nothing else but this first sin."

Again, Augustine in his 39th Epist. speaks of both these kinds of sin, but distinguishes them, as also in several parts of his works.—(In Epist. ad Rom., C. V. v., 12.)

Nic. Videllius, Professor of Theology in the University of Franequer.

The reason why God imputes the sin of Adam to his posterity is his justice, and not mere will, as the Arminians teach.

The imputation of the first sin is such, that in fact the whole posterity of Adam is made liable to eternal condemnation, contrary to what the Arminians hold.—(Theod., Disp. xx., thes. 5 and 6.)

S. Lubbertus, S. Theology, Dr. and Professor at Franequer, and a member of the Synod at Dort.

When Faustus Socinus, the Photinian, that he might invalidate the doctrine of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, in his work, *De Christo Servatore*, lib. iv., c. 4, had objected to Covetus and others of the orthodox, that we thus conclude; "That as by the crime and disobedience of Adam men are condemned and dead, because that crime and disobedience were imputed to them; so by the righteousness and obedience of Christ they are absolved and live, because that righteousness and obedience are imputed to them. To which Socinus answered, that it was false that the crime and disobedience of Adam were imputed." At these words, Lubbert wrote in the margin, that we cannot be guilty of the sin of another unless that sin is imputed to us.

But in his answer he uses the following arguments: It is agreed between us and our opponent, that we are constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam, and are constituted righteous by the obedience of Christ; the only question is respecting the mode in which this takes place. How are we constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam? and how are we constituted righteous by the obedience of Christ? We say that in both cases the effect takes place by imputation.

For by the sin of Adam imputed to us we are constituted guilty. When the apostle says that all have sinned in Adam, he means that the sin of Adam, as our head, was imputed to us when we were yet in his loins, and on that account we are reckoned guilty : and at the same time it is the will of God, that as Adam by his transgression was rendered averse to God, that is, corrupt and depraved, so we by the same transgression imputed to us, as I said, are born averse to God, corrupt and depraved. Therefore the sin of Adam is imputed to us, and that corruption and depravity in which we are born, we call original sin.

When Adam, by his total apostasy from God, became guilty of death, all his posterity were implicated in the same guilt ; no otherwise than if they had all sinned against God, by perpetrating the crime of murder.

It is manifest, therefore, that the same guilt is IMPUTED ; or which is the same thing, the same crime by which GUILT was contracted.

John Maccovius, Professor in the University of Franequer, and also a member of the Synod of Dort.

It is called original sin, because man derives it from his first origin, and it is imputed or inherent. The imputed sin of our origin, is the defection or first transgression of Adam and Eve, committed by eating the forbidden fruit ; and afterwards IMPUTED to the whole human race, naturally propagated from these two persons.—(Loc. Com., disp. xiv.)

John C. Emdan, of the same University.

Concerning all the posterity of Adam, we affirm that as well on account of the fall of Adam, as by their own proper sins, they are cast into a state of misery, in this following the scriptures which teach that the first origin of death was from Adam ; so that, in truth, his posterity are reckoned to have sinned in him, and so on account of the sin of Adam, which he committed by eating the forbidden fruit, not as if this sin was altogether another's, but as being in some sort their own, they are adjudged to death.—(Rom. v. 12.)

Agreeably to the scriptures it is said, that all who are born of Adam sinned in his loins, because it was so appointed by God that that sin which Adam first committed should not be reckoned only the sin of Adam, but should be IMPUTED to his posterity.

The meaning of the scripture is evident, since it pronounces that men are constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam, for it clearly teaches that men are so constituted sinners by the sin of Adam, that according to the divine ordination sin is imputed to his posterity ; and on this account they are equally reckoned sinners, as if in their own proper person they had committed it.—(Idea Theologica.)

Thomas Strackius.

As Martin Becan, the Jesuit, in his book concerning God, says, "That by original sin these two things are understood: 1. The actual sin of Adam, by which he destroyed himself and the whole human race. 2. Habitual sin, which is contracted by his posterity from the actual sin of Adam; that is the corruption and vitiosity of human nature; hence that sin is truly described to be an actual defection of the descendants of Adam, who, while in his loins, made a defection from God to the devil. And this corruption or vitiosity of nature is inflicted on man by God, as a just judge, on account of the aforesaid defection, by both of which man is rendered miserable and made obnoxious to eternal damnation, until by Christ he is liberated from that misery. Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, v. 12, speaks concerning this first sin.—(Vindication of the Catechism of the Palatinate, quest. vii.)

James Arminius, Professor in the University of Leyden.

Since the condition of the covenant first entered into by God with the first man was, that if they would remain in his favour and grace by the observance of this precept, and others, the gifts conferred on him, with the same grace, would be transmitted to his posterity; but if they (our first parents) should render themselves unworthy of these blessings by their disobedience, their posterity also should be destitute of them, and should be obnoxious to the contrary evils: hence it has happened, that all men naturally propagated from them should be subjected to death, temporal and eternal, and should be destitute of the gift of the Holy Spirit and of original righteousness; which punishment, the privation of the image of God, is wont to be called original sin. *From these things the imputation of the sin of our first parents is necessarily inferred; for wherever there is the punishment of sin there is the imputation of the same.*—(Disp. 31, thes. 9.)

Neustadian Admonition of the Professors of the Palatinate.

We acknowledge original sin to be not only guilt, but the hereditary depravity of human nature, which is repugnant to the law of God and deserving eternal punishment.

Hieronymus Zanchius, Professor of Theology.

Because the whole human race which is propagated by natural generation from Adam were in his loins, hence the precept, with its penalty, was not addressed to the person of Adam alone, but also pertained to the whole human race. Therefore, we believe and confess with the apostle, that in Adam sinning all men sinned; so that that disobedience was not peculiar to Adam, but was the common [disobedience] of the whole human race; since his guilt has involved all men naturally descended from his loins, as the apostle Paul to the Romans hath manifestly taught. And as an



antithesis to the disobedience of Adam, he has firmly established the obedience of Christ. For if the obedience of Christ is no less ours by imputation than Christ's by his own proper action, because we are born again by his incorruptible seed and from his spirit, it follows that the disobedience of Adam also is *IMPUTED* TO US, and we are held by his guilt, who have been born from his corrupt seed, who is the father of us all.

That sin which by the first man entered into the world, was not only the privation of original righteousness, and the total corruption of human nature, but also the disobedience of Adam itself, which was not ours in the act, nevertheless, in its fault and guilt has come upon us by *IMPUTATION*. And by way of explication he says, "We therefore say that that disobedience of Adam, which was not ours in act, yet as to the fault and guilt, became ours BY *IMPUTATION*; since God most justly imputes that sin of Adam, as being the *head*, to us the members.—(Treatise on Redemption, thes. i.)

For this the reason why all men have sinned in Adam, that is, were made guilty, because Adam first sinned by his own actual disobedience; so we also in him as in our origin are made guilty; and his sin becomes ours BY *IMPUTATION*. Thus also the apostle expresses it, when he says, "By the disobedience of one, namely, Adam, we are all constituted sinners. This is our *ἀνομία*, the imputation of Adam's sin, which has become ours because we are his members. And this is the principal thing in original sin."

Zachariah Ursinus.

Original sin is the guilt of the whole human race, on account of the fall of our first parents, and the privation of the knowledge of God, &c. Two things are included in it: 1. The guilt of eternal damnation on account of the sin of our first parents. 2. The depravation of our whole nature since the fall. Concerning both these Paul speaks, Rom. v. 12, By one man, &c. Some, while they admit that we are guilty in consequence of this first sin, deny that there is in all an innate depravity which deserves damnation and wrath. For they allege that the concupiscence in which we are born cannot be of the nature of sin.

Against such it must be held, first, that the whole human race is guilty of the eternal wrath of God, on account of the disobedience of our first parents, unless they are delivered from this guilt by the grace of the Mediator; secondly, there is in us, besides this guilt, a defect, and inclinations contrary to the law of God as soon as we are born. These defects and evil inclinations are sins deserving the eternal wrath of God.

Paul clearly teaches, that by one man's disobedience we were all rendered guilty, and made obnoxious to damnation. And he compares this condemnation of all, on account of the sin of one, to the justification of many on account of the satisfaction of one. As then, by Christ, there is a two-fold grace, namely, THE *IMPUTA-*

tion of righteousness, and the regeneration or restoration of corrupt nature, so also the evil flowing from the sin of Adam is double; first, GUILT, on account of the sin committed by him, and depravity of nature contracted from him and propagated to us.—(Explic. of the Catechism, par. i., quest. 7.)

George Sohnius, the colleague of Ursinus at Heidelberg.

Original sin, as well in Adam as in his posterity, includes three deadly evils, the demerit, the guilt or liableness to punishment, and the depravity or corruption of nature. All these concur in the parent and in his posterity in relation to the first sin, with this difference only, that Adam sinning was the principal agent committing the fault, deserving the guilt, and casting off the image of God, and rendering himself depraved. Of all these do his posterity partake by IMPUTATION and by generation from a corrupted parent. Then it is in vain disputed by the sophists, whether the demerit, the guilt, or the depravity is contracted by the fall, for all these do actually exist; so that taking the words in a wide sense, you may say that the fall and disobedience of our first parents, and in them of the whole human race, by which all of them in like manner lost the image of God, depraved their nature, became the enemies of God, and contracted the guilt of temporal and eternal death; unless deliverance and reconciliation should take place by the Son of God, the Mediator.

Again, “all are dead by the offence of one man:” therefore his offence was the offence of all, but theirs by participation and IMPUTATION, otherwise they could not be said to be dead by the offence of one, but by many offences.

Although it is truly said that the first sin was committed by Adam, yet not as a single person but as the father of the whole human race, however it is not correct to say that original sin existed in Adam, or that Adam had original sin, for then the cause and effect, actual and original sin, would be manifestly confounded. The first sin of Adam, therefore, as we said before, must be viewed in a double aspect. In one respect it was the sin of Adam, and was not original sin, but actual, *originating*, that is, giving origin to the original sin of his posterity; in another respect it was the sin of his posterity, who were in his loins; so that in mass they committed the same sin, and hence IT IS IMPUTED TO THEM ALL. Thus this our fall pertains to our original sin.

Bellarmin's first proposition is, “*that the first transgression of Adam, which is the transgression of the whole human race, is original sin, if by sin be meant an action.*” This is correct, if it only be added, If sin be taken for an action not of Adam alone, but of his posterity, who, *in mass*, sinned in Adam. For thus this action was ours, pertaining in the first place to our original sin.

We here close our extracts from these witnesses to the doctrine of imputation, as held by the Reformers. The careful reader can-

not but be struck by the distinctness and uniformity of their views. At this time, when the doctrine itself is perverted, and the opinions of the Reformers and others are shamefully misrepresented, we should be glad to see the whole collection of testimony made by Rivet, translated and published in a volume.



## ESSAY IX.

### MELANCTHON ON THE NATURE OF SIN.\*

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REFLECTING men have always wondered, that as there is in most things in the universe so beautiful an order, there should exist so great confusion, so many crimes and calamities, together with diseases and death, in the human race. The philosophers, in attempting to account for these phenomena, have ascribed them partly to matter, partly to the will of man, and partly to fate, which they say is the necessary connection of the first cause with all second causes, whether physical or voluntary. The Manicheans, adopting a corrupt philosophy, professed certain insane opinions, equally dishonourable to God and injurious to morality; maintaining, that there were two eternal and independent principles, the one good and the other evil, and also the doctrine of necessity; by which opinions, the church in ancient times was very much agitated. It is the part of a pious mind to think and speak with reverence concerning God; and to embrace and hold fast those sentiments which are true, and friendly to piety and good morals, and which have been approved by the deliberate judgment of the judicious and pious in the church; and not to indulge vain curiosity, or a fondness for useless speculations, nor to enter into infinite labyrinths of disputation.

We ought, however, in the commencement, to lay it down as a certain principle, from which nothing should induce us to depart, that God is not the author of sin, that he does not will sin, nor approve of sin, nor impel the wills of others to choose sin: but that he is truly and awfully opposed to sin, which he has declared, not only by his word, in which eternal misery is threatened, but also by the unceasing manifestations of his wrath against it, in the dispensations of his Providence. And the Son of God, by becoming a victim for sin to appease the anger of his Father, has demonstrated in the most striking manner, by his death, that not God, but the devil, is the author of sin. Let it then be received as an undoubted truth, that sin was not created, nor ordained by God; but that it is a dreadful destruction of the divine work and order; and that the true cause of sin is the will of the devil, and the will of man, which

\* This translation, from the "Common-Places" of Melancthon, was published in 1833.

freely apostatized from God, who neither willed nor approved their disobedience. Ingenious men have, on this subject, stated many inextricable questions; but omitting purposely these abstruse disquisitions, we declare that doctrine which is true, and confirmed by the testimonies of divine revelation, and which we embrace with all our hearts; although we do not undertake to answer all the subtle objections which may be brought up by disputatious men.

Now, that God is not the cause or approver of sin, is made evident by the following testimonies of scripture: "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." Gen. i. 31. That is, everything was pleasing to God, regular, and accordant with the plan of the divine mind; and so formed as to be profitable to man.

In Psalm v. 5, it is said, "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." And in John viii. 44, it is said of Satan, "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it."

In the words of our Saviour just cited, a distinction is clearly implied between the substance of the evil spirit and his moral qualities. Satan himself, as to his substance, was the work of God, by whom all the angels of heaven were created, some of whom fell into sin; but a lie he has of himself, which he produced by the exercise of his own free will. And between these things there is no repugnance; for while the substance is upheld by God, the free agent may be the cause of his own sins, by abusing his liberty and apostatizing from God.

Another testimony may be found in Zech. viii. 17, "And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour, and love no false oath, for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord."

Now God is sincere in his professed hatred of sin: it cannot, therefore, be thought that he wills sin.

Again, 1 John xxii. 16, "The lust of the flesh is not of the Father, but of the world." And 1 John iii. 8, "He who committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning;" that is, the devil is the original author of sin. And in regard to the human race, we read in Rom. v. 12, "By man sin entered into the world;" that is, sin is not a thing created by God; but man, in the exercise of his own liberty, has turned away from God, and wasted the gifts of God, and has propagated this his ruin to posterity.

Nor do those words of scripture, where it is said, "I will harden the heart of Pharaoh," and other similar expressions, militate with the sentiments expressed above; for to those acquainted with the Hebrew idiom, it is well known that such expressions signify permission only, and not an efficacious will; as when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," the meaning is, do not suffer us to fall into temptation; or do not permit us to fall or to be overthrown by temptation.

It is here important, that we should have fixed in our minds, the true idea of sin, that we may be able clearly to distinguish be-

tween it and what is produced by God. Sin is the disturbance or confusion of the divine order; sin, therefore, in the simplest notion of it, is not a substance, nor anything positive, but a defect, or privation. Sin, as it exists in the mind, is darkness; that is, we have not the clear knowledge of divine things, nor do we yield a firm assent to the divine threatenings and promises. But sin, in the will, is aversion; that is, the heart is destitute of the fear of God, of confidence, and love towards him, and of that obedience of heart which the law of his nature demands, but is carried away with wandering desires which are opposed to God. Now, that those evils are properly defects, and not things created by God, is evident enough. Instead of being his work, sin is the abominable destroyer of the order of his work. It does not follow that he is the author of sin, because he preserves in being the creature in whom it exists; but he is exceedingly displeased with sin, and sent his Son to appease his wrath, and to heal the wound made in our nature. Let it be kept in mind, therefore, that God is not the cause of that *vitiosity* with which we are born; nor can he will that which is evil, or at all approve it. But here a cavil, not uncommonly made, must be noticed. It is asked, if sin be nothing positive, but only a defect, is God angry at nothing? To which we would answer, that there is a great difference between a *privation* and a *negation* (inter nihil privativum et nihil negativum). A privation requires a subject, and is a destruction of something which properly belongs to that subject, and on account of which it is rejected as worthless. Thus the ruin of an edifice is a destruction of its frame, or a dissipation of its parts. So the depravity of our origin is a pollution and disorder of our faculties, which defect in our nature is the object of the divine hatred, and on account of which he is displeased with the being in whom it exists. The nature of privation may be illustrated by a bodily disease, in which the subject remains, but in a disordered state. On the other hand, a *negation* is that which requires no subject, as the house of Alexander is now nothing—a mere negation, for it has no existence. This simple illustration may be sufficient to shed more light on this subject to learners, without involving them in subtle disputations or inextricable labyrinths. Geometrical truths, by means of diagrams, may be presented to the eye; but it is not so with these metaphysical truths, which can only be understood by a gradual and attentive consideration. A man who is wounded, when beholding his wound, is certain that it is not a mere negation, but that the parts are really lacerated. So Paul, beholding the wickedness and vices of a Nero, grieves, and does not consider these things as mere negations, but as a most abominable ruin of a divine work. When in this light we view evil as a *defect* or *privation*, we never can think that sin is a thing which should be extenuated. As in man, considered as the workmanship of God, order is a part, and is the production of his power, and is pleasing to him, and conducive to the beauty and happiness of man, and is called an excellent thing, a



great good ; so, on the contrary, the disorder in which consists the ruin of this good work must not be ascribed to God, but to the devil, and to the free will of man, and is hated of God, and brings destruction upon the beings who are the subjects of it, and is called evil ; that is, a thing not agreeable to the divine mind, but altogether displeasing to God, and destructive to men and devils.

This statement will in some degree illustrate the nature of actual sin, concerning which there are so many intricate questions : it will not be difficult to understand how it is merely a defect, if you will look, not only at the external action, but at the state of the mind which governs the action. Eve, for example, in eating the forbidden fruit, was not governed by the light of God ; but not to be governed by the light of God, is to have the will opposed to God, and that this is a defect of a right will, it is easy to perceive. Originally, then, her sin was of a privative nature, although it was followed immediately by external acts, which are, it is acknowledged, of a positive nature. First, it was an internal disorder ; the motions of the soul wandering from their right course, just as a ship without sails and rudder tossed by the winds and waves. This figure will very well serve to show that the evil consists in defect ; for as long as the ship remains on the bosom of the deep, it will have some motion ; so man, while he exists, will have some sort of action, however irregular and confused it may be. Neither because God sustains man in being, is he the author of sin, for those defects in the exercises of the mind are not produced by Him. In the case of Eve, just mentioned, the cause was her own free will. Her actions were her own, and she spontaneously turned herself away from God.

Let it then be admitted as an undoubted principle, that God is not the author of sin, nor wills sin, and it will follow that there is such a thing as contingency ; that is, that all things do not happen by necessity. For sin proceeds from the will of men or devils, and not from the will of God. Contingency supposes that the actions of men proceed from free will, and that they have the power to sin and to refrain from sinning. The contingency concerning which we here speak, relates to human actions, and not to the motions of other things, concerning which it is common to treat when physical causes are under consideration.

Moreover, it must be conceded that the scriptures attribute to man, in his fallen state, some liberty of choosing those things which are proposed to him as a rational creature, and of doing those external works which are commanded by the law of God : for on this account the righteousness which they render to the law is called the righteousness of the flesh ; because, as Paul teaches, it is competent to the strength of nature to perform it. "The law is not made for a righteous man," that is, not to coerce the renewed, but to punish the impenitent. Likewise, "the law is a schoolmaster ;" and unless some sort of liberty remained to fallen man, there would be no manner of utility in laws and commandments ; and, indeed,

the whole apparatus of civil government would be useless. It is certain, therefore, that liberty, which is the source of contingency, does exist, as I before said. But as God is said to determine contingencies, we must be careful to distinguish between his determination of those things which are agreeable to his will, and those which are not; or, between those events which depend entirely on his will, and those which are brought about by human agency, though not to the exclusion of divine agency. God foresaw the crimes of Saul, but he did not will them; nor did he impel his will, but permitted him to act according to his own inclination, without interposing any obstacle to his freedom. But in the view of Saul's misconduct, which he clearly foresees, he resolves to remove him from the high office to which, by divine direction, he had been advanced. This foreknowledge did not cause Saul to act by necessity; nor did it at all affect the free agency of man; nor take away that liberty which belongs to man, even in his fallen state. Neither does the fact that God sustains human beings in existence, and in the exercise of their powers, interfere with the contingency and liberty of their free actions. When Eve sinned, the cause cannot be ascribed to the upholding power of God, but her own will was the real cause of her act; for when human nature was constituted, it was endowed with liberty, and the continuance of human nature by the same power which created it, does not destroy that freedom which was thus conferred on man in his first creation. Thus, although God preserved Saul in being and in the exercise of his faculties, the cause of his sin was not at all this divine sustentation, but his own free will.

To the representation above made, the words of the prophet Jeremiah are sometimes objected, where he says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." On which I would briefly remark that it is one thing to speak of the choice of the will, and another of the event, or accomplishment of what we will. Pompey willed to make war upon Caesar, and freely willed it, but the event was governed by many other causes besides the will of Pompey. This declaration of Jeremiah is a delightful doctrine, and contains the sweetest consolation. We are here taught, that "the way of a man," which includes the regulation of his private affairs, and the success of his public vocations, cannot be sustained and secured by human wisdom and strength. The minds of the best men are not sufficiently perspicacious to foresee all dangers, or to guard against them, but human judgment is liable to be misled by errors, as was that of king Josiah, when he judged it expedient to make war on the Egyptians. Many sad errors from this cause might be enumerated; which led Cicero to complain, that no man was at all times wise. Often, human counsels are involved in inextricable difficulties by mistakes which are incident to all. How many disasters to the house of David arose from one false step! But even when human counsels are wise, and the cause good, the event may

not correspond with the hopes entertained. Great calamities, which suddenly cast down the most sagacious and exalted of mortals, do, in the providence of God, take place, when human prudence and human power are of no avail to prevent the disaster, according to that true saying of the poet,

“Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo :  
Et subito casu quae valere ruunt.”

It was concerning these various obstructions, and in relation to human weakness, and the instability of human affairs, that Jeremiah was speaking in the passage cited above. His object was to show us, that the event of things depended on many secret causes, unknown to us, and that, therefore, we ought to fly to God, and ask and expect direction, and the regulation of our affairs from his aid. Here we see the benefit of those gracious promises, “I will not leave you comfortless.” “It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.” “The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord ; and he delighteth in his way.” By such promises as these, we are warranted and encouraged to trust in the Lord for help, in time of need ; and we should be ever ready to acknowledge, that nothing spiritually good, or of a saving nature, can be accomplished by us, without God helping us ; as Christ declares, “Without me ye can do nothing.” And John the Baptist says, “A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.” Pompey, Brutus, Antony, and others, attempted great things, but it pleased providence to disappoint their expectations, and to advance other men to the supreme power. Although it is evident that the help of God is needed in all actions which are connected with salvation, yet it must not be hence concluded, that man possesses no liberty of any kind, much less that all good and evil are to be ascribed to the divine efficiency : the true meaning of the passage from Jeremiah, therefore, is, that salvation cannot be obtained by human counsels and human ability. Let us therefore learn, that we are indebted to divine aid, when we are made instruments of saving benefit to ourselves or others ; and also, we owe it to the same cause, that we are not the pests of the human race, like Pharaoh, Nero, Manes, and other similar characters. We ought, therefore, under the deep conviction that we can do nothing ourselves, most earnestly apply to God by prayer and supplication, that we may be directed and governed by our heavenly Father. But it is most evident that this, our dependence on God, does not make him the efficient cause of our sin. The church of God, entertaining correct views of this matter, while she acknowledges God as the author of all good, holds in utter abomination the crimes of Nero, and will neither say that such actions take place by necessity, or that they come to pass by God’s willing them.

Another text which has been made the occasion of objection, is that of Paul, where he calls the Ephesian Christians, “Elect ac-



according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the purpose of His will." And again, where he says to the Corinthians, "But it is the same God who worketh all in all." Now it is perfectly manifest that these passages, taken in the connexion in which they stand, relate only to the church, and to those saving acts which God is pleased to excite and regulate in the members of the church; but are not intended to be applied to the universal sustentation of all things, nor to all the particular motions of animals. Let these texts then be interpreted according to their true intention, and let them not be forced into a signification foreign to their genuine sense.

Paul admonishes us that the church is saved and governed, not by human wisdom or power, but by the wonderful operations of God. The preservation of Noah from the deluge, the protection of Israel in Egypt and in the desert, the achievements of Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and other pious and distinguished persons, are to be ascribed to the power of God which stirred up and enabled them to lend effectual aid to the church, and the propagation of the true doctrine; wherefore the declarations of holy scripture referred to above, are intended for the consolation of believers, that they may be assured of the presence of God with his church to afford her aid in all her dangers and afflictions. It was God that helped David in his wars, and made him victorious over his enemies. It was God also who gave assistance to the dying Lawrence, so that he was preserved from making shipwreck of faith through fear of death. By such declarations and promises our souls are consumed, and encouraged to pray in the words of the Psalmist, "Direct me in thy truth and teach me." As, O Lord, thou bringest salvation to thy church, so make me a subject of thy grace and a vessel of mercy. And this explication of those texts of sacred scripture will equally serve to cast light on many similar passages. But it should, in the last place, be added, as a thing requisite to the right understanding of this subject, that there is a twofold necessity. The one is absolute, as when a proposition or thing is simply necessary, so that the contrary is plainly and altogether impossible. Such propositions are said to be necessary with an absolute necessity. Such is the proposition, that there is a God—that he is intelligent, eternal, possessed of power, wisdom, justice, and goodness; and that he wills only what is just and good, and cannot will anything which is repugnant to his own most holy nature. He cannot be delighted with, or will injustice, cruelty, lust, or any wickedness. But there is another necessity which is denominated *the necessity of consequence*, that is, such propositions or things, the opposite of which are not in their nature impossible, and are only rendered necessary by preceding causes, or because they are foreordained. And between things of this kind there is a great difference. In regard to events of one class, which are in their own nature good, God not only wills and foreordains them, but foretells them. Such, for example, is this, that on a certain

day, the dead will be raised up. This event is not necessary simply and absolutely, but *by consequence*. But in regard to those things which are evil, as wicked acts of every sort, God does not will them, but appoints bounds over which he will not permit the wicked to pass. These events, however, may be said to be necessary in the second sense given of that term. Pharaoh persecuted and oppressed the Israelites: this, in its own nature, was not necessary, but altogether contingent; for the opposite was not a thing impossible, but because it so occurred from causes which existed, it is said to be necessary *by consequence*.

Here also seems to be the proper place to speak of physical necessity. Thus we say the fire burns by necessity, the sun is moved; but according to the doctrine of the church, this physical necessity falls under the head of that necessity of consequence which we have just described. Fire burns because God has given to it this nature; the sun is moved by the same power which created it, and we see in the history of Joshua and Hezekiah, that motion is not essential to the sun.

We have now gone over all the principal questions which are to be agitated on this subject, which if they be carefully considered, we shall be able to form a correct judgment concerning all these controversies; and it will be evident that it is far from our purpose to bring in a stoical necessity. How can any one pray to God with the least confidence, who believes that all things are governed by a fatal necessity? The saying which is found in the tragedy, that the blame of our bad conduct is to be charged to fate, is highly injurious to good morals. Every one is acquainted with the anecdote of the servant of Zeno who, when he was about to be punished by his master for some misconduct, excused himself by saying, that it would be unjust to punish him, since he was forced by fate to sin. But fate never made any man a sinner. The sentiments of Plato, in the second book of his Commonwealth, are correct and good. "If," says he, "we would have the state well governed, we must contend with all our might that no one, old or young, in poetry or prose, should ever utter the opinion, or be permitted to hear it, that God is the cause of the crimes of any one; for as such an opinion is dishonourable to the Deity, so it is injurious to the state and repugnant to sound reason." There is a common argument on this subject which not a little disturbs the minds of the pious, and which it may be useful to explain. It is said that second causes cannot act without the concurrence of the first, therefore, as the second cause (as, for example, the disobedience of Eve) is sinful, the first must be so also. I have known some persons who were by this objection driven to great confusion of mind, and to the adoption of horrible conclusions. There is a subtle metaphysical answer which is sometimes given to this objection, but I prefer resorting to one which is better suited to common apprehension. It is this: God is present with and concurs with his creatures, not like the God of the Stoics, as if bound to

second causes, so that he is able to act only as they act ; but as a perfectly free agent, sustaining them in existence, and with consummate wisdom accommodating his agency to the nature of the case, not only giving efficacy to second causes, but also, when he chooses, counteracting them. Thus, though he upholds the laws of nature by which corporeal things are governed, yet we find him ordering the sun to become retrograde, and the clouds to withhold the rain for three years, and then suddenly sent plentiful showers. And we know that although God sustains second causes, He is not confined to them, for every day events occur which are out of the sphere of their operation. In the midst of battle, and on the seas, and in diseases, many are delivered from various dangers when second causes can be of no avail.

We ought not, therefore, to entertain the opinion of the Stoics, that God is confined to second causes so as never to act independently of them, but we should believe that he is always present with the work of his hands, sustaining all things by his power, and governing all events by his own most perfect freedom ; so that there is good ground for praying for his aid and interposition in any emergency. Thus God not only sustains, but willingly helps those who act in an orderly manner ; but in regard to those who act disorderly, although he upholds these also, yet he cannot be said to aid them in doing wrong. Eve was so constituted and endowed with free will, that she had it in her power either to obey or to transgress, and the existence of divine favour, as the first cause, did not make God the author of her sin. It is indeed universally true, that the second cause cannot act without the sustaining power of the first ; but, as was before observed, this upholding providence must be carefully distinguished from that exercise of power which assists in the production of the sinful act ; for that effect which God does not will, he never aids the creature to bring into being. If any one inquire, therefore, what was the immediate cause of the sin of Eve when she turned herself away from God, the answer must be, her own free will. The maxim, that the second cause cannot act without the first, although admitted by all, is very differently understood by the Stoic and by the Christian. The former believes that in similar circumstances the same effects must necessarily take place ; but the latter makes an important distinction between good and evil actions, which the Stoic entirely overlooks. It is true that the second cause cannot act without the first, that is, unless it is sustained by the first ; but this does not hinder the first cause from acting, when it seems good, without the second, because he is a perfectly free agent ; and when the second cause is a free agent it acts without the co-operation of the first in the production of evil, for the power of originating such acts belongs essentially to that liberty with which free agents are endued. In this explanation I have endeavoured to avoid too much refinement, and to present the subject in such a manner as to be level to the common apprehensions of men. Others, however, choose to



explain this matter a little differently. They say that the second cause cannot act without the first, in producing a positive effect ; but in a mere delinquency, or defect of right action, the second cause can act alone. For example, the will of Eve in the first transgression did not produce a positive effect, but was an aberration from the proper mark, defect in the quality of the act. This explanation does not really differ from the one already given, and may seem to render it more perspicuous. But after all it is best to believe in the general, that God has established such a connexion between the first and second cause, as he acting freely chooses should exist ; so that while he co-operates to sustain the creature, He is not the author of sin.

## ESSAY X.

# DOCTRINES OF THE EARLY SOCINIANS.

PUBLISHED IN 1833.

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It is known to all students of ecclesiastical history, that Poland, and the neighbouring states of Transylvania, Bohemia, and Hungary, were the theatre of the Unitarian churches, during a considerable part of the sixteenth century. The reason why the propagators of heresy chose this region, for the dissemination of their opinions, is easily explained. In all other countries of Europe, they were restrained by the laws, but here liberty of conscience was enjoyed. It may also be mentioned, that with the doctrines of the Reformation was introduced a spirit of free, unshackled inquiry into all opinions; and as was natural, from the imbecility of man, this liberty degenerated into licentiousness, and frequently terminated in downright infidelity. At first, the heterodox of Poland professed to be either Arians or Sabellians; they did not, indeed, adopt these denominations, but they held the opinions which are commonly so denominated. There were, however, numerous shades of difference among these Unitarians, and they separated into a great number of petty sects, which were usually denominated from the town or province in which the leading members respectively resided. One writer asserts, that at a particular time, about the middle of the sixteenth century, the number of Unitarian sects was above thirty, but he does not inform us in what points they differed from each other.\* According to the custom of the times, many public disputations were held, and many synods were convened, by which means it was attempted, but unsuccessfully, to settle the points in controversy between the Trinitarians and Anti-Trinitarians.

In the midst of this confusion of sects and prevalence of heresy, Faustus Socinus visited the country. His uncle, Laelius Socinus, had been there many years before; but though he left his opinions as an inheritance to his nephew, he was himself either too timid

\* Maimbourg.

or too prudent to avow and defend the Unitarian opinions which he held. But Faustus, with equal talents and address, possessed that courage which is requisite to appear openly as the advocate of unpopular tenets. When he first came to Poland, all parties seemed to be afraid of him; for they were aware that he had pushed his Unitarianism to consequences which they were not prepared to admit. None of the sects were disposed, therefore, to receive Socinus into their communion. No doubt he was displeased at being expelled from the communion of Unitarians; but he disguised his feelings, and artfully turned all to his own advantage. He now professed an unwillingness to be connected with any particular sect, but declared himself to be the friend of all; and by intercourse with the leading ministers and teachers, he in a short time brought them all into one harmonious body, and induced them to embrace his peculiar opinions, which have ever since been called SOCINIANISM. One dispute, however, arose, which Socinus, with all his address, could never bring to a favourable conclusion. Francis Davidis, a man of learning and abilities, who had passed through many changes of theological opinion, was a leading minister among the Unitarians in Transylvania, and now began to teach and preach, that Jesus Christ being a mere man, had no more claim to divine worship than any other saint; a most legitimate conclusion from the acknowledged premises. But the broaching of this doctrine excited much uneasiness and alarm. Blandrat, who was now physician to the young prince Sigismund II., over whom he had a decisive influence, sent to Poland for Socinus, as being the only man who, by his skill and address in managing men, would be likely to prevail with Davidis to renounce his dangerous opinion. Accordingly Socinus came, and for several months was lodged in the same house with the heretic, as he was considered by the Unitarians. But all his arguments and persuasions were ineffectual to convince Davidis of his being in an error. How could they, when the doctrine which he held is so manifestly correct upon Unitarian principles, that it is probable there is not now a Unitarian in the world who does not adopt the opinion of Davidis as correct, and dissent from that of Socinus as most unreasonable? But light does not break upon the world all at once. Even Unitarians may for a while remain in gross error and idolatry; and what to their successors is still more mortifying, they may proceed so far as to persecute those who differ from them. The young prince of Transylvania was induced to cast Davidis into prison simply on account of his pertinacious adherence to his opinion. Here the persecuted man died. We ought not, however, to be too severe in our censures of such conduct; for the doctrine of toleration was not yet well understood, even by those who pleaded for it in their own case, when they needed its shelter. We think that this case may fairly be placed as a parallel to that of Calvin. It is not clear, however, that Socinus advised this measure, although it is very certain



that Blandrat directed the whole affair, as in all religious matters the prince was governed by him. So far as Socinus's own declaration will go to exculpate him from all concern in this transaction, we must acquit him of being accessory to the death of this learned man; for we recollect to have seen in some history of the churches in Poland, that when at a large synod Socinus was accused of participating in the persecution of Davidis, he publicly denied that he had advised his imprisonment, or had any concern in the matter. But although the leading advocate of the obnoxious opinion was thus put out of the way, the doctrine of Davidis prevailed more and more. Socinus not only never changed his opinion respecting the worship of Christ, but he would hold no communion with any one who denied that Christ should be worshipped, and publicly taught and published the opinion that those who received the doctrine of Davidis, had no just claim to the name of Christians.

The Unitarians of Poland cultivated biblical learning with assiduity and no small success, as appears from the volumes entitled "*Poloni Fratres*," &c. Most of the writings of Faustus Socinus were at first anonymous; and he strongly expressed his opinion in favour of that mode of publication, because men are so prone to be influenced in forming their opinions, by prejudices arising from the name of the author. His principal work was on the person and offices of Christ, entitled "*DE CHRISTO*." It was in answer to a treatise in support of the divinity of Christ, written in the Polish language, by a Jesuit, whose name was Wiek. This work of the Pole was, indeed, nothing else than the treatise of Bellarmin on the deity of the Saviour, translated into the Polish tongue. Socinus's book received many answers, of which it is not our purpose at present to speak. The Racovian Catechism, of which we propose to treat somewhat particularly in this article, received its name from the town of RACOW, where it was first published. It was not written by Socinus, nor published during his life, but was compiled by SMALCIUS, from his writings, and at first appeared in the Polish language, A. D. 1606. It was not long, however, before this Catechism was published in Latin by MOSCOROVIVS; and also in the German language, by Smalcus himself, who sent a copy of it to the professors of Wittenberg. Among the fathers in this cradle of the reformation, it was a matter of serious deliberation whether an answer should be given to it or not. At length, however, it was determined that it would not be expedient to neglect it, lest the Socinians should consider silence as a sign that they had achieved a victory, and should be led vainly to triumph in the strength of their career. In conformity with the resolution now adopted, a pious and solid theologian, Frederick Baldwin, was requested to undertake a refutation of this Catechism. An able answer was also published by that consummate theologian, Wolfgang Crellius. The attentive reader will be in no danger of confounding this orthodox theologian with another of the same name greatly

distinguished among the Socinians. This work of Crellius was unfortunately left unfinished, in consequence of the distinguished author having been called to be court preacher to the Duke of Brandenburg. But there was no lack of polemics to contend for the faith, against this summary of all heresy. Alsted, Alting, Maresius, Tarnovius, Hornbeck, John Gerhard, and others, undertook to refute it; but no refutation was so full and satisfactory as that of N. Arnold, professor in the University of Franequer; in which he sets down the questions and answers of the Catechism, without abridgment, and gives a solid answer to each, as he goes along. Arnold took a deep interest in this controversy, not only because he considered the questions in dispute as involving the essence of Christianity, but also because he himself was a native of Poland, and was intimately acquainted with the condition of the reformed church in that country.

It is our object to give a faithful translation of a part of this work, principally for the purpose of showing by what sort of argument and exegesis the old Socinians defended their cause; and that our readers may have the opportunity of observing the similarity between the neology with which we are threatened, and the heretical opinions of those who lived two centuries ago.

The part of this work which we have selected for translation is the first part of the tenth chapter, *De Libero Arbitrio*.

**Ques. 1.** "IS IT IN OUR POWER FULLY TO OBEY THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD?"

**Ans.** "Certainly: for it is evident that the first man was so formed by God, that he was endued with free will; and no reason existed why he should be deprived of this power, after the fall: nor was it consistent with the justice of God that man should be deprived of free will. Accordingly, in the punishment inflicted on his sin, there is no mention made of any such loss."

**REFUTATION BY ARNOLD.**—To obey the commandments of God, to put off the old man, to desist from sinning, not to walk after, but to mortify the flesh, to contract no evil habits, but only such as are virtuous and good, this writer asserts, is altogether in our power. But we affirm, that these things are not at all in our power; according to the declaration of our Saviour, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John xv. 5), and that of the apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13). And the same apostle says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13). Why should these things be ascribed to God and to Christ, if they are completely in the power of man?

It is true, indeed, that man when created by God was endued with free will; but a distinction must be made between man in a state of integrity, and man as fallen. In the former he possessed free will, and also the power of obeying all the commandments of

God, and of avoiding all that was forbidden. Not that man by the fall was entirely deprived of liberty, but he became depraved, so that in things pertaining to salvation he labours under an entire blindness of intellect. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) And the will of man has become so rebellious, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Rom. viii. 7.)

When this author says that there was no reason why God should deprive man of free will, he errs, not knowing the Scriptures, which clearly teach, that God, as a just Judge, denounced to man on account of his fall, the punishment of interminable death. And this was not merely eternal death, as the Socinians pretend, but the threatening comprehended corporeal and spiritual death also ; so that man is not only liable to eternal death, but to death temporal and spiritual ; and is declared to be dead in trespasses and sins. Now since every kind of death is a part of the penalty incurred by sin, which a just God inflicts, who does not see that man in just judgment is deprived of the right exercise of free will ?

Hence also we may understand what is to be thought of that declaration, that it is inconsistent with justice for a man to be deprived of free will. It certainly belongs to justice to inflict deserved punishment on the disobedient ; but this depravation is a part of the punishment. Neither have you a right to say, that other men are not chargeable with the sin of Adam ; that as they never committed that sin they cannot be punished for it ; for undoubtedly Adam should be considered as the head of the whole human race, and so his sin was not *personal* but *universal*. As the father and head of the whole family of man did he perpetuate this crime, and so he involved all his posterity in guilt ; and thus spiritual death has come upon them, as the merited punishment of this sin, and this includes the depravation of the free will of man.

In regard to the last words of the answer to the question stated above, that there is no mention of any such punishment inflicted on Adam, it is false ; for we know that the punishment of the sin of Adam was death ; but death is fourfold ; temporal, spiritual, eternal, and the afflictions of this life. These several species of death, it is true, are not distinctly mentioned, yet they should all be considered as comprehended in the general denunciation ; and this is rendered manifest where spiritual death is mentioned as the state of man, by reason of which he is declared to be dead in sin. But if man be dead in sin, how can his will remain upright and uninjured ?

In the primeval state, the judgment of man in regard to things natural, civil, and spiritual, was correct ; and the inclination of his heart was pure in the choice of the highest good ; not only possessing freedom from necessity and coercion, but also an immunity from every degree of depraved disposition, and from all moral and physical evil. And this is that goodness and rectitude in which God is said to have created man. But, although man in a state of



integrity was, in fact, inclined to that which was good, nevertheless, by the sovereign dispensation of the Creator, and from the very nature of a dependent creature, his will was mutable; so that it could be turned to either of two opposites, and was liable to be deceived by the false appearance of objects presented, so as to be led to embrace that which was apparent, instead of the true good; of which mutability the event furnished a certain demonstration.

But, in man's fallen state, his will is despoiled of its rectitude; and, although his judgment in other things may be, to a certain degree, correct, yet in spiritual things it is entirely blind; and his inclination is so averse to all spiritual good, and so determined to evil only, that he must be considered as entirely depraved. And, accordingly, the scriptures represent him as being blind in his understanding, perverse in his will, and rebellious in his affections; nay, as being "dead in sin;" labouring under a complete impotence as to all spiritual good.—Gen. vi. 3, Matt. vii. 13, Rom. viii. 7, 1 Cor. viii. 4, Ephes. ii. 1.

Now, although man in this state is free from the necessity of nature, and also from that of coercion, yet he is not free from the servitude of sin and death. Before his conversion, he is not only impotent, as it relates to spiritual good, but is turned away from it with aversion. The fact, therefore, is, that man can contribute nothing towards his own conversion, but simply the natural faculty of the will, without which he would neither be a man, nor would he be capable of conversion.

**Ques. 2.** "BUT IS NOT THE WILL OF MAN VITIATED BY ORIGINAL SIN?"

**Ans.** "There is no such thing as original sin; the scripture teaches no such doctrine; and the will of man could not be vitiated by a cause which had no existence. The sin of Adam being a single act could not corrupt his own nature, much less had it power to deprave the nature of all his posterity. That this sin should be charged on them, is, as has been said, a doctrine unknown to the scriptures; and it is utterly incredible that God, who is the fountain of equity, should be willing to impute it to them."

**REFUTATION.**—That the will of man is depraved by original sin, we have already declared to be our belief. Our opponent denies this, because, in his opinion, original sin has no existence, and could, of course, be the cause of no such depravity. The affirmative, however, is capable of being demonstrated by an appeal to facts, and to the testimony of scripture. From both these sources, we shall, therefore, now endeavour to show that original sin exists in every man who has derived his nature from Adam by natural generation.

It is true the scriptures do not express the inherent and habitual stain of our nature by using the technical phrase *original sin*; but they clearly designate the same thing, by words which have

the same import. By a metonymy, it is called *flesh*. (John iii. 6.) It is called, by way of eminence, *sin*, which reigneth in our mortal bodies. (Rom. vi. 12.) And *sin* that dwelleth in us—evil present with us. (Rom. vii. 17.) So also it is denominated *the old man*, as indicating its origin from our first father, and to designate its vile-ness and corruption; as it is contrasted with the *new man*, which signifies something precious and excellent. It is called “a law in our *members* ;” that is, a principle which binds with force like a law. It is also denominated “*the body of sin*,” by which strength and cohesion are represented as belonging to this evil principle. It is also termed “*the old leaven*,” and, by James, *lust* (ἐπιθυμία), by a metonymy of the subject for the adjunct. But original sin is not any one faculty, habit, or art, but a general disorder, or ἀραξία.

With the fathers, original sin has various names, such as *mali tradux*, a hereditary evil; *malum domesticum*, a domestic evil; *infusum et coagulatum delictorum contagium*, the concentrated contagion of all crimes. Augustine called it *naturae vitium*, the vice of nature; also *peccati contagium ex origine*, the original contagion of sin; and, finally, *peccatum originale*, original sin; which last name, as most conveniently expressing the thing, was retained in the schools, and has been in common use to this day. The word *original* has no relation to God as the author of our being, and the first cause of all things, but altogether to the second cause, namely, our sinning first parent.

But to deny the existence of original sin altogether is the madness of the Socinians; and to assert that it cannot be proved from scripture, is the dotage of reason. What, then, is that which is said (Gen. iii. 5), where Adam is said to have begotten a son in his own image? In which passage we should carefully attend to the antithesis between Adam and Seth; that is, between the image of God in which Adam was created, and the image of Adam in which Seth was begotten. For, as *the image of God* designated the moral excellence in which Adam was created, the wisdom of his understanding and the sanctity of his will, so the image of Adam, now fallen, signified the blindness of his mind and the depravation of his will. Adam, by his apostasy, transformed himself from the image of God to the opposite character. He could not, therefore, beget a son in the image of God, in which he was created, but *in his own image*; that is, in a state of corruption.

It will not do to say that Adam begat Seth a man like himself, as to his species, for that idea was fully expressed when it was said “he begat a son;” nor will it answer to say that he begat a son, in figure, form, and external lineament, like himself, for it is supposed, not proved, that such a likeness existed between the father and the son; and if it had been the fact, this was not a matter of so much consequence as that, to designate it, the Holy Spirit should use the twofold expression of *similitude and likeness*, as had been done before, when it was said that Adam was made in the image of God. Certainly, in that case, the sacred writer had no

respect to any external image or likeness ; neither, therefore, should we suppose he had here, where he uses the same terms.

Another evasion is, that we should here understand the moral image of Adam as regenerated by the Holy Spirit ; so that Seth was the heir of that renovated image ; but that renovated image did not pertain to man's nature, but was altogether the effect of supernatural grace, which is never communicated by physical generation, but by a mystical regeneration.

Again : does not Job prove the doctrine of original sin when, by the Holy Spirit, he says, " Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ? Not one." (Job xiv. 5.) To which Socinus has nothing to except but this, that believers are not unclean, but washed and sanctified. It is true, believers are holy, but not as they are natural men, for " whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh." The same doctrine appears evident from the necessity of regeneration, concerning which, Christ says : " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." From this, it is clear that our first birth is corrupt ; for what need would there be for regeneration if our first generation were holy ? And how does it happen, if depravity is not born with us, that there should not be found a man who, by the tendency of his own nature, does not rush into the commission of sin ? And if the whole mass of human nature had not become corrupt, it would never have been said of Christ that he was in all things made like to us, *sin* only excepted ; for, if this be not the fact, then all infants dying in infancy are as free from sin as Christ himself was.

But, finally, infants die, and death is the punishment of sin ; yet it cannot be the punishment of actual sin, for infants, dying in infancy, are incapable of committing it ; they are destitute of the use of reason and of the exercise of free will ; and those who are our opponents in this question consider it a cardinal point that there is no sin which does not consist in the exercise of the will. Since, then, the punishment of death is not inflicted on infants for actual sin, it must be for original sin.

There is no truth nor force in what is next asserted, " that the fall of Adam did not corrupt his own nature, and, therefore, could not corrupt that of his posterity." For they admit that eternal death was the punishment incurred by the sin of Adam ; and why should it seem strange, that that act, which subjected the transgressor to so great a penalty, should, at the same time, work a corruption of his nature ? Surely that which could effect the greater might also produce the less. But the reason why the sin of Adam corrupted the nature of his posterity was, because it was not the sin of an individual, as your sin or my sin, but it was the sin of a whole race. It was an *universal* sin. For Adam was the stalk, the root, the head of the whole family of man.

That this corruption of nature came upon man as the punishment of sin, is evident from this, that everything which properly comes under the name of death is the punishment of sin ; for this was the



penalty of the law, and it comprehended every kind of death; and this depravation of nature is expressly called by this name by the Apostle Paul (Ephes. ii. 1), wherefore original sin is the punishment of the first sin.

The conclusion of this answer, "that because God is the fountain of all equity, it is altogether incredible that he should punish the posterity of Adam on account of his sin," is a mere assertion totally incapable of proof; for why should God cease to be the fountain of equity when he punishes the posterity of Adam on account of his sin, when he has constituted him the head and representative of the whole race? The legitimate course of reasoning is, that because God does punish the posterity of the first man on account of his sin, therefore it must be just, and should be so considered, whether we can understand it or not. Whatever he does is just, because he does it; for his will is the rule of justice.

*Ques. 3.* "BUT ARE THERE NOT SCRIPTURE TESTIMONIES WHICH TEACH THE CERTAIN EXISTENCE OF ORIGINAL SIN, SUCH AS THAT IN GEN. iv. 5: 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually;' and that in Gen. viii. 21: 'For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth?'"

*Ans.* "These testimonies treat of voluntary sin; therefore, from them original sin never can be proved. For as to the text first cited, Moses teaches that it was sin of that kind which caused God to repent that he had made man, and which provoked him to bring a deluge upon the world; but who would venture to assert that this was done on account of original sin inherent in the nature of man? And, in the other passage, it is declared that the sin of man should not again be the cause of the destruction of the world by a deluge, which certainly cannot relate to original sin, or inherent depravity."

REFUTATION.—That the doctrine of original sin is inculcated in these kindred pages, is evident from several considerations. The corruption of man is represented as being universal, habitual, and unceasing. What could more clearly indicate that the principle of human actions was vitiated? What sort of proof could be more convincing, that this depravity was born with us? Our opponent, however, replies, that the sacred historian is here speaking of actual sins, on account of which God overwhelmed the world with a deluge. I grant that actual sins are referred to in these passages, but I deny that they alone are intended to the exclusion of original sin: for the Holy Spirit makes a plain distinction between the wickedness which was external and actual, and the imaginations of the heart which are internal and habitual; otherwise there would be here a mere tautology, and the very same thing, without necessity, would be repeated. Another decisive evidence that inherent natural depravity is included in the account, is, that infants, who were incapable of actual sin, were nevertheless swallowed up in

the deluge as well as adults. Now, this judgment was sent upon them justly or unjustly ; if the first, then they are chargeable with sin, and grievous sin, too, to deserve such a punishment ; but this of necessity must be original sin, for, as we have seen, they are not capable of actual sin. But if this punishment should be pronounced unjust, then we do no less than accuse the Governor of the world of acting the part of an unjust judge, in bringing such a calamity unjustly upon his innocent creatures ; which would be blasphemy.

In these passages, it was the design of the Holy Spirit not only to indicate actual sin, but to trace it up to its internal cause, namely, original sin. For the declaration is universal, in relation to all the thoughts and imaginations of the heart ; and, to give it the greater force, it is exclusive of everything of an opposite kind. " Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil, and that continually." Surely, if this be a just description of the moral condition of man, his whole soul must be depraved. Total depravity could not be more emphatically represented. The evil is universal—*every imagination of the thoughts of the heart*. It is exclusively of all good—and *only evil*. And it is the same at all times—and *that continually*. The true source of evil thoughts of every kind is designated by Christ, where he says, " Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." When, therefore, we refer the second cause to the first, the stream to its fountain, the effect to its cause, the Socinian has no right to complain. To the eye of God, both the cause and the effect are equally manifest ; the evil tree as well as the bad fruit. This last was, indeed, the immediate cause of the deluge, but the former was the cause of this. As infants perished in the deluge, and God is here giving the reason why the deluge was sent, it must be comprehensive enough to include them ; and, therefore, must include original as well as actual sin, unless any one will choose to maintain that infants were punished without any faults, which, as was before shown, would be an impious impeachment of the character of God. But if it be alleged that they could not be guilty of actual sin, then it follows that they were punished on account of original sin. So much for the first testimony. As to the second, our opponent says, " that it is merely declared that the sin of man shall not again be the cause of a deluge for the destruction of the world ; but this can have no relation to original sin." But why not ? We have seen that, both on account of original and actual sin, God brought the deluge on the world ; so now, in this parallel passage, he makes known his will, that in time to come, the sin of man, both original and actual, should not induce him again to destroy the world by a deluge. As the form of expression is nearly the same as in the former text, the argument will be the same ; and as there it was shown that original might fairly be inferred from the universality and constancy of the prevalence of actual sin, so the same conclusion may be deduced from the words now under consideration.

*Ques.* 4. "BUT WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT DECLARATION OF DAVID (Psalm li. 5), 'BEHOLD I WAS SHAPEN IN INIQUITY, AND IN SIN DID MY MOTHER CONCEIVE ME?'"

*Ans.* "It should be remembered that David is not here speaking about every man, but concerning himself alone, and that not simply, but in relation to his fall; and he uses that method of speaking of which he himself furnishes an example in Psalm lviii. 4, 'The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.' Wherefore, neither can original sin be evinced by this testimony."

REFUTATION.—When David says, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," from the consideration of the actual sin committed by him, he ascends to the origin of all his sins, and laments the proneness of his nature to sin; and this inherent depravity he represents as coeval with his existence—a corrupt mass in which he was conceived and born, and which he had derived from his parents; all which, taken together, can signify nothing but original sin.

Against this interpretation, Socinians make many objections, as may be seen in the work of Volkeliuſ, *De Verâ Religione*; all which, however, have been fully discussed and refuted by our Spanheim, in his "Collection of Theological Disputations." It is alleged that David is not speaking here concerning the conception of his own nature, but of the conception of sin. But the unreasonableness of this gloss is too manifest to need any refutation. This would be referring what is said about the subject to the act—what is said about the sinner to his sin. Certainly David was not here speaking of the mother of his sin, but of his own mother.

Again: it is alleged "that David is not here speaking of original sin, but of the actual sin of his parents, and especially of his mother." Now, this is frivolous. David was not here confessing the sins of his parents, but his own sins. Moreover, his parents were, in all probability, dead long before this time, as David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, who was an old man when Samuel anointed David to be king; and this Psalm was composed when David was past middle life. And for what purpose should he drag his mother's sins into public notice in this manner? Besides, there is not the smallest evidence that David's mother was remarkable for her transgressions. The sin of which David complains is that from which he prays to be cleansed, and from which he entreats that God would hide his face; but who does not see that these were his own sins, and not those of his parents?

A third interpretation given to this passage, is, "That from it, not even actual sin can be proved, much less original sin; for it is possible that one might be conceived in iniquity, and yet not be a sinner, just as one might be conceived and born in blindness, who was not himself blind." But that a person should be shapen in iniquity, and yet not be a sinner, is a palpable contradiction. If it



be meant that we may derive our being from a sinner without being infected with sin, as the child of a blind man need not be blind, the error consists in comparing things of an unequal kind. Individual properties are not indeed communicated by ordinary generation ; but qualities which affect the whole species are transmitted, of which nature is original sin.

They allege again, " that if it had been the design of David, in this passage, to designate the innate corruption of our nature, he would have ascended from his own sin to that of the first man ; but since he does not do this, but stops with the mention of his immediate parents, and especially of his mother, it is a clear indication that he did not mean here to speak of original sin." To which it may be replied, that there was no need of David's ascending to the sin of Adam, for he was not now speaking of the first origin of sin, but of original sin itself ; not of *the originating sin*, as we say in the schools, but of *sin originated* ; although, indeed, the latter supposes the existence of the former. It fully answered the purpose of the penitent Psalmist, to describe that inbred corruption which he was deeply convinced dwelt within him, and also the immediate source from which it was derived to him, which was by natural descent from his parents ; and this was substantially the same, as if he had traced this corruption up to his first parent.

But it is still objected, " that, if the words of David are taken literally, they can by no means be referred to any person but himself, for he speaks of no other : if they are to be understood figuratively, then, according to all just rules of interpretation, they cannot be the foundation of an argument." Take them as you will, if they have any meaning at all, they must be considered as evincive of the fact that David himself was infected with original sin ; and if it existed in him, what reason can be assigned why it should not be in others ? And as to a figurative interpretation, the words do not appear susceptible of such an explanation without being subjected to great violence ; for what can it be supposed that he intended to represent by saying that he was shapen in iniquity and conceived by his mother in sin ?

The author of this catechism, perhaps, distrusting such evasions as these, confines himself to two particulars in his attempts to break the force of the argument derived from these words. The first is, that David was here discoursing of himself alone, and that he had special reference to his own disgraceful fall, and did not design to speak of the sin of other men. But this subterfuge takes for granted that David alone was infected with birth-sin, which, for the best reasons, is utterly denied. Moreover, this exposition concedes the main point in controversy, namely, that at least one man has been born in original sin ; for it is admitted that David was shapen in iniquity, and conceived by his mother in sin. Now, this is precisely what we assert, only we argue from the fact, that if this was the origin of David, it must also be of every other man, and

the argument cannot be invalidated as long as the fact is admitted ; for what imaginable reason can be assigned why David, above all other men, should be conceived in sin ? There is the less reason to think that David would speak thus of his origin, as being in a peculiar manner polluted, when it is considered that he was born in lawful wedlock, and was descended from pious parents, as appears by the sacred history. But it would be easy to show, if this were the proper place, that what David so emphatically declares respecting his own sinful origin, the Holy Ghost, in other passages, teaches to be the condition of all men. See Psalm xiv. 4, Job xiv. 2, Ephes. ii. 3.

The second evasion to which our catechist resorts, is, that the words ought to be understood hyperbolically, just as we must understand those words of the same author, in Psalm lviii. 4. "The wicked are estranged from the womb ; as soon as they are born, they go astray, speaking lies." So in this place, David, under the strong feelings of repentance, exaggerates his sin ; and therefore speaks of it as if it was coeval with his existence. These people blow hot and cold with the same breath. What is here said about exaggerating his sin, is in direct opposition to what we read in the Institutes of Ostorodus, who asserts that these words were spoken by David, not with a view to exaggerate his criminality, but to extenuate his sin, as proceeding from a constitution born with him. But who that has ever read attentively the whole psalm, can believe that the royal penitent had the least thought of extenuating his sin ? If then it should be considered a hyperbole, in which David exaggerates his sin, I would retort the argument, and say, if his object was to speak in the strongest terms of the greatness of his actual sin, he was led by the same motive to designate as its source, his original corruption ; and how could he have more effectually represented his guilt, than by ascending from his actual transgressions to his original corruption ?

The reference to the passage cited from the fifty-eighth psalm can be of no service to the cause. The cases are entirely different ; the passages are by no means parallel. It is one thing for a pious man, descended from pious parents, to declare, "that he was shapen in iniquity, and conceived by his mother in sin," and another to say, that the wicked go astray, and speak lies from the womb. These last words evidently relate to voluntary, personal acts ; but this can by no means be said of the former. I deny, however, that even in these last words there is anything hyperbolical ; for the object was to describe the depravity of the wicked, both in relation to act and habit. But admitting that there is a hyperbole in the words from the fifty-eighth psalm ; yet that would not prove that the same must be the fact in regard to the passage in the fifty-first psalm. Therefore, I must, after impartially considering all the evasions to which Socinians have had recourse, consider the doctrine of original sin as fully established by this single text, if there were no other in the Bible.

*Ques. 5.* "BUT DOES NOT PAUL SAY, ROM. v. 12, 'THAT ALL MEN HAVE SINNED IN ADAM?'"

*Ans.* It is not declared in the text quoted, that all men sinned in Adam; for the words in Greek, ἐφ' ᾧ, which are everywhere rendered in Latin by *in quo*, *in whom*, may with more propriety be rendered *because that*, or *since*, as in the parallel passages, Rom. viii. 3, ἐν ᾧ, *in that*; Phil. iii. 12, ἐφ' ᾧ, *that for which*; Heb. ii. 13, ἐφ' ᾧ, *in that*; 2 Cor. v. 4, ἐφ' ᾧ, *because that*. It is evident, therefore, that the doctrine of original sin cannot be built on this passage."

**REFUTATION.**—The passage of scripture which the Catechism here brings into view, is certainly the most decisive for the proof of the doctrine of original sin of any in the Bible. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and so death passed upon all men because that (in whom) all have sinned." In the Latin vulgate, the latter part of this phrase is rendered, "*in whom* all have sinned." The apostle in this place institutes a comparison and contrast between Adam and Christ, and shows that the righteousness of Christ avails to the justification of all who are united to him, just as the fall and disobedience of Adam was the cause of the sin and condemnation of all his posterity. He then proceeds to show that death had actually invaded the whole human race, in consequence of their connection with their first father. The fact is undeniable that all die, not even excepting infants; and it is vain to allege that all became voluntarily sinners by the imitation of Adam, for to the majority of men the first sin was unknown, and as to infants, it is certain they could not become sinners by imitation; nevertheless, they are obnoxious to death as much as adults, and in circumstances of as much bodily pain and distress; which can only be accounted for by supposing that they are partakers of the blame and punishment of the first offence. The apostle goes on to declare the reason why all are infected with the pollution of sin, and are exposed to its punishment, which is, that in this first man all have sinned. The phrase ἐφ' ᾧ ought in this place to be considered as of the same import with ἐν ᾧ, in 1 Cor. xv. 22, where we have ἐν τῷ Ἀδμ in Adam all die, so ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ in Christ shall all be made alive. And in Mark ii. 4, this identical phrase is used in this sense, "They let down the couch ἐφ' ᾧ on which the paralytic lay." But if we take this phrase as our adversaries wish, to designate, not the *subject*, but the *cause*, it will come to the very same thing. For the reason is here assigned by the apostle why death has passed upon all men, and according to this interpretation, the reason is, "because all have sinned;" but this cannot be understood of actual sin; for in this sense all who die have not sinned, since infants are incapable of sinning actually. The meaning therefore must be, that all have sinned in their first father and representative. If they had not sinned in him, they would not have been subjected to the punishment of his first transgression. And that condemnation comes



on the race on account of this one sin, is so clearly taught in the following verses, that there is no room left for any reasonable doubt, that the apostle meant to teach that this sin was imputed; or that hence condemnation was incurred by all men. It is repeatedly declared that by the *one sin* of the *one man* many *had died*—*had come into condemnation*—*had been constituted sinners*, &c. : it seems, therefore, most natural and reasonable to suppose that the apostle in the 12th verse, where he assigns a reason for the death of our whole race, means the same which he evidently does in the subsequent verses. This interpretation renders the whole context consistent with itself; whereas, if by *πᾶντες ἡμάρτων*, we understand the actual sinning of all, not only will infants, who also suffer death, be excluded; but the reason assigned for the death of all, will be different from what it is in the following verse; "Guilt has, by one man, come upon all men to condemnation, not in effect merely, but in righteous judgment."

In this passage then we are clearly taught, first, the universal and total corruption of all men; secondly, that this corruption is derived from the first man, not by imitation of his first sin, concerning which many knew nothing, and of which others were incapable, but by a participation of the crime of the first man. Hence all men are bound to suffer death, although not guilty of actual sin; for according to the nature of the apostle's argument, the participation and propagation of sin and death must be derived from one man, just as the participation and propagation of righteousness and life are derived from another, even Christ. In a word, the argument may be stated simply thus; "As by Christ alone life and righteousness are introduced, so by Adam sin and death. And as all who are justified and receive the gift of life, are indebted for these benefits to Christ alone; so as many as sin and die, do all sin and die in Adam alone. Therefore original sin exists, as is evident from the fact that infants die, who are altogether incapable of actual sin."

The objection which they make, "that it is not asserted that all men die in Adam," is of no force; for the contrast which is here set up between the first and second Adam, requires that the words of the apostle should be understood in this sense. The same thing is necessarily implied in those words, "As in Adam all sin, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" for evidently, if all die in Adam, all must have sinned in him. It is repugnant to every idea of divine justice, that any should be subjected to the punishment due to another, without any participation in his sin.

Where the catechist asserts that *ἐφ' ᾧ* should be rendered *because that*, or *inasmuch*, in accordance with the use of the same particles in other passages, he gains no help to his cause, for I have shown, that admitting this interpretation, still an unanswerable argument for original sin may be derived from this passage. But I deny that the words ought to be thus translated: and our opponent has adduced no reasons for his interpretation, unless that elsewhere these

words are thus rendered ; which reason makes just as much for us as it does for him. We might therefore argue thus : the particles  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\phi}$  elsewhere signify *in which*, or *in whom*, therefore they ought to be so understood here ; but our opponent would not admit this conclusion, because "*à particulari ad particulare non valet consequentia*:" that is, we cannot draw the conclusion from the use of a particle in one place, that its signification is the very same in another. Well, we can make the very same objection to his argument. It is not, therefore, a satisfactory reason that  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\phi}$  should signify *inasmuch*, or *because that*, merely because passages may be found where the words are thus used. Besides, the places alleged are not in point, for in Rom. viii. 3, the phrase is not the same ; it is  $\epsilon\nu \tilde{\phi}$ . In 2 Cor. v. 4, we do indeed read  $\epsilon\phi' \tilde{\phi}$ , yet the particles are here used *subjectively*, that is, in a sense corresponding with our interpretation, for  $\tau\tilde{\omega} \sigma\kappa\eta\nu\epsilon\iota$  is evidently the antecedent to which the relative refers. And in Heb. ii. 18, the phrase is  $\epsilon\nu \tilde{\omega}$ , and, therefore, although it be taken *casually*, it does not affect the interpretation of the words now under consideration. But while we judge that the Latin version is correct in rendering this passage (in quo) *in whom all have sinned* ; yet we are not of opinion that the force of the argument for original sin is at all invalidated by the other interpretation ; for as we have shown above, it comes eventually to the same thing, whether you take these words as expressive of the *subject* or the *cause*.

As to the exception of Ostorodus, that in this passage the word "sinners" does not denote those who were really such, but persons who are spoken of as if they had been sinners, it is too unreasonable to require a moment's consideration ; but it is enough for ever to silence this objection, that these persons are *really* subject to the penalty of death ; if therefore they are liable to death, which is the wages of sin, they must be sinners ; otherwise there would be no correspondence between the crime and punishment. If the crime was merely supposititious, and the punishment real, how could God be a just judge when he treated those as real sinners, who were only putatively such ?

**Ques. 6.** "AS YOU HAVE TAUGHT THAT MAN'S FREE-WILL IS NOT VITIATED BY ORIGINAL SIN, EXPLAIN ALSO HOW FAR THE POWER OF FREE-WILL EXTENDS ?

**Ans.** "Generally, the strength of human nature in regard to those things which God requires, is very small ; yet for those duties which we are bound to perform, the will by which they may be performed exists in all men ; so that human ability is not so small, but that if any one sincerely desires to exert his power in obeying the commandments of God, he, by divine assistance, will not make his efforts in vain. This divine aid God never withholds from any man to whom he has communicated the revelation of his will ; otherwise He could never justly chastise or punish the rebellious ; but we know he does both."

REFUTATION.—Although in man there is remaining some light of reason and conscience, and some liberty of will in relation to actions of a merely moral, civil, or political nature; yet in regard to things spiritual, and those which concern our salvation, the strength of human nature is not only, as the catechist acknowledges, “very small,” but is absolutely nothing at all; for man in his state of destitution and ruin is “dead in trespasses and sins.” Now we know that in death there is not merely *little* strength, but not any strength. This is the fact in regard to all those who have fallen under the power of corporeal death, as it relates to natural actions; and the same is true of spiritual death, as it relates to spiritual actions. And as the man who is naturally dead, is altogether impotent to put forth the actions of a living man; so he who is spiritually dead, is equally unable to put forth those acts which appertain to the spiritual life. For although there remains in man the natural faculty of willing, yet in this faculty there is no ability of willing that which is good, and of refusing that which is evil, of a spiritual kind. But what is this which our opponent teaches? “That human strength is not so very small, but that if a man will exert what he has, by the divine aid which will be granted, he will not fail of obeying the will of God.” This is purely Pelagian. It is as if you should say, “a man who is naturally dead, if he will exert the strength which he has, may, by divine aid, put forth the acts of a living creature.” But we know that a man naturally dead can do nothing toward his own resurrection, and the same is equally true respecting spiritual death. No man can produce strength in himself, if the cause and principle of that kind of action be wanting. If he can, it must be either in dependence on God, or independently of him. If the former, it is not man but God who produces the effect; if the latter, the creature is independent of his Maker for at least one good thing which he possesses. He produces ability in himself by his own effort, and does not receive it from above; but this pretension approaches near to atheism, and is blasphemous. This is for a man to attribute to himself what the scriptures expressly ascribe to God, namely, “the power to will and to do;” and the apostle asserts, “That we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor. iii. 5). And if the words of Christ himself are true—and we know they are truth itself—“Without me you can do nothing,” the assertion of our adversary is altogether false, when he asserts that a man, without the help of God, or previous to that aid, can produce strength in himself to perform the will of God. Indeed, his aid he will deny to none of those to whom he has revealed his will. But this is true only of those who, understanding his will, implore aid from God. Thus in Psalm l. 15, “Call upon me and I will deliver thee;” and in Luke xi. 9, “Ask and it shall be given you.” But the passage which best suits our purpose is that in the 13th verse: “How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!” But even to ask aright, and to implore di-



vine aid sincerely, are not in the power of man, until by the operations of grace those groanings which cannot be uttered are excited in him. For until the spirit of prayer is given to a man by God, he cannot truly call Jesus, Lord; nor can he with the spirit of adoption cry Abba, Father. It is true then, that God does not withhold his aid from those to whom he not only externally makes known his will, but whom he internally persuades; for indeed, that the aids of grace are denied to many who externally have the will of God preached to them, can be doubted by none except such as are ignorant, that "God heareth not sinners," and that their prayers are an abomination unto Him; but he will hear the petitions of the righteous, and his ear is ever open to their cry.

In answer to what this writer says in the last place, "That God cannot justly punish the rebellious, unless man is endued with the power of free-will to obey, is of no force, because God most righteously punishes that impotency which the first man incurred for his posterity. For the devils themselves are evidently unable to do anything truly good; and yet who would deny that they are justly punished for their wickedness? They who urge this argument allege that if you take away free-will, you take away all punishments and all rewards. But this is not true, as we know from the case of the blessed angels, whose will is not a state of indifference between two opposites, which is the Socinian notion of liberty, but the will of the angels is unchangeably determined to that which is good, and to that alone; so that they cannot will that which is evil; and yet who would deny that these holy beings are deserving of praise for the perfection of their obedience? And this inclination of theirs only to that which is good, God is pleased to crown with a gracious reward of everlasting felicity.

*Ques. 7.* "BUT WHAT IS THAT DIVINE AID OF WHICH YOU HAVE MADE MENTION?"

*Ans.* "Divine aid is two-fold, internal and external.

*Ques. 8.* "WHAT IS THAT DIVINE AID WHICH IS EXTERNAL?"

*Ans.* "The principal is the word of God, especially its promises and threatenings; but of these, the promises have much greater force than the threatenings. Here also it may be remarked, that under the new covenant, the promises are far more excellent than under the old. Moreover, it is much easier to do the will of God under the new, than it was under the old covenant."

**REFUTATION.**—I observe, in the first place, that our author makes external aid to consist in the promises and threatenings of God's word. Now these may indeed furnish strong motives to induce a man to accept the good proposed, and to reject the evil; but there seems to be no propriety in calling this by the name of "aid," unless we give to the term an acceptation much broader than usual. But that which is most objectionable in this statement is, that divine aid is confined to the external promises and threatenings; whereas

God not only promises good and threatens evil in his word, but graciously operates within us, and by divine energy renders these motives effectual, which without such an internal operation would produce no effect whatever ; for the good contained in the promise is neither apprehended nor desired, much less enjoyed, until the mind is illuminated and excited by divine power. And what else is that which we read in so many perspicuous texts of sacred scripture, where God is said to enlighten those who are spiritually blind ? as in Ephes. i. 17, 18—to regenerate and renew those who are carnal, as in John iii. 5, 6 ; 1 Cor. iv. 15 ; Peter iii. 7. To quicken the dead in sin, as in Ephes. ii. 1, 5. To soften the hard heart, as in Ezek. xi. 19 ; xxxvi. 16. To convert us to himself, as in Jer. xxxi. 13, 19. To draw us effectually, as in John vi. 44. To create within us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us, as in Psal. li. 12. To open our understanding to understand the scriptures, as in Luke xxiv. 31, 45. To confer upon us saving faith, as in Phil. ii. 9. To excite good thoughts and volitions, as in 2 Cor. iii. 5 ; Phil. ii. 13. To cause us to walk in his statutes, as in Ezek. xxxvi. 27 ; and to fear his name, as Jer. xxxii. 39 ; and to love the Lord, as Deut. xxx. 6. From all these texts, and numerous others which might be added, it is manifest that “divine aid” consists in God’s efficient and gracious operation within us, and not in the bare proposition of promises and threatenings. For without a divine agency to illuminate our minds and cause us to understand the promises, so as spiritually to apprehend the good which they contain, the mere exhibition of them will never produce any saving effect. Unless God incline our will to embrace the good revealed in the word, with all our strength, we shall continue to be unaffected by it. “For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” The writer, while he describes both promises and threatenings under the name of “divine aid,” intimates that the former are much more powerful in their operation on the mind than the latter ; concerning which, however, we are constrained to doubt, since there are many more who hate and avoid sin through fear of punishment than from love of virtue. Again, that the promises of the New Testament are much more excellent than those of the Old, and that the duties of the new covenant are much more easily performed than those of the old, is asserted, but not proved, by our author. We say, that in substance the promises of the Old and New Testament are the same, namely, Christ and his benefits, together with eternal life ; so that, in substance, there is nothing promised in the new covenant which was not also promised in that of the former dispensation. It is true, however, that the blessings promised are much more clearly exhibited under the Gospel than they were under the Law. In regard to clearness and sweetness, it may be said, that the promises of the New Testament are more excellent ; but not as it relates to the substance of the things promised.

We are aware, however, that Socinians believe that the Old and New Testaments differ, not merely in circumstances, but in essence.

*Ques. 9.* "WHAT IS THAT 'DIVINE AID' WHICH YOU CALL INTERNAL?"

*Ans.* "It is this; that God seals on the hearts of those who obey him whatever he has promised."

**REFUTATION.**—Wonderful Theology! This sealing, which the catechist calls "divine aid" of the internal kind, is produced by a consideration of the divine promises and threatenings; that is to say, the seal of a thing which is sealed, is "aid." But sealing is an act, the object of which is merely to produce a more perfect confirmation. When, therefore, God is said to aid a man by sealing the promises, it is nothing else than for God to certify to a man, running of his own accord in the right way, a prosperous issue to all his efforts. According to this view of the helps of grace, there is not in works of piety any such thing as the preventing, co-operating, or accompanying agency of God; but only a certain sealing of the work consummated by man, to assure him that his labour shall not be in vain. Simply to state the Socinian theology, in relation to this point, is a sufficient refutation. For if there be any truth in the scripture doctrine of grace, it is God who first excites us to works of piety, then co-operates with us in our spiritual exercises, and enables us to persevere in the performance of the good thus commenced.

*Ques. 10.* "IF THE WILL OF MAN REMAIN FREE [AND UNHURT BY THE FALL], WHY IS IT THAT SO MANY HAVE SET THEMSELVES IN OPPOSITION TO THIS DOCTRINE?"

*Ans.* "They are induced to do so, from entertaining the opinion that there are certain testimonies of scripture which they are confident teach that man is no longer possessed of free will.

*Ques. 11.* "BUT WHAT ARE THOSE SCRIPTURE TESTIMONIES ON WHICH THEY DEPEND?"

*Ans.* "They are of two kinds. The first are such, as that from them they suppose this doctrine can be fairly inferred; the others are thought to contain express declarations, that free will does not now exist in man."

**REFUTATION.**—It is not with the orthodox a mere matter of conjecture or opinion that the will of man, since the fall, is enslaved to sin; but it is a truth which is capable of being confirmed by the clearest demonstration: and we not only *suppose* that we have texts of scripture from which it can be deduced that the will of man is entirely indisposed to all spiritual good, but we do actually accomplish what we profess, as will appear when we come to the consideration of the particular passages on which this doctrine rests.



Here we must, for the present, close our extracts from ARNOLD'S REFUTATION of the Racovian Catechism. The writer proceeds in the following questions, in this tenth chapter, *De Libero Arbitrio*, to treat largely of predestination. We should be pleased, if our space would permit us, to follow this learned and solid theologian through the whole discussion; but what we have extracted may serve as a specimen of the manner in which theological discussion was conducted nearly two centuries ago. One thing must have struck the reader as remarkable, namely, that the modern arguments, by which error attempts to defend her cause, are precisely the same as those employed for centuries past. We know, indeed, that those who now adopt and advocate these opinions, greatly dislike this comparison of modern hypotheses with ancient heresies, and denounce it as invidious. But why should it be so considered? Or why should they be unwilling to acknowledge the conformity of their opinions with those of ancient times, when the agreement is so manifest, not only in the doctrines themselves, but in the arguments and interpretations of scripture by which they attempt to support them? If the "New Divinity" be correct, then certainly many who were formerly condemned by the majority of Christians as heretics, ought to be considered the true church, and their doctrines as orthodox; while those who censured and condemned them, ought to be considered as a set of unreasonable bigots, who by their numbers and influence were able to suppress the cause of true Christianity.

Certainly, then, they who are now so confident that they have received new light, ought not to be ashamed of their brethren who struck out this same light hundreds of years before they were born, and defended their opinions by arguments as ingenious, and by exegesis as learned, as any of those now living have a right to pretend to. It is, however, a fact, that these theologians, who long maintained the character of being orthodox, are very reluctant to be classed with Arminians, Pelagians, and Socinians, even when they are conscious that their opinions coincide with those designated by such denominations. This does not arise from any real abhorrence of the sects so denominated; but from knowing that the Christian public, with which they are connected, entertain strong prejudices against these sects; and it requires no small degree of moral courage to stem the torrent of popular prejudice. There has been, therefore, in our "new light" theologians, an unusual solicitude to persuade the religious community that they were not contemplating innovations upon the ancient creed of the orthodox, but that they had merely adopted a more rational philosophy, by which they were able to explain the knotty points in Calvinism, so as to render doctrines naturally offensive to human reason, if not entirely palatable, yet in a great degree free from objection. These attempts at reconciling the new opinions with the commonly received doctrines of the church have been pushed so far, that even some who have gone far into the "new divinity," have been

ashamed of the want of candour and ingenuousness which has sometimes been manifested. And now, at length, the character and tendency of these modern theories have created alarm even in the largest body of professed Arminians on earth. We mean the Methodist Episcopal church. The tables are strangely turned upon us. Formerly we shrunk from contact with this increasing body of zealous Christians, lest we should receive some taint of Arminianism; but now they are lifting up a warning voice to their widely extended disciples, not against our Calvinism—for against this they have uttered their anathemas long enough—but against our Pelagianism; that is, against the Pelagian character of the “New Divinity;” for they are at no loss to identify the system which is now so zealously maintained and propagated with that of John Taylor of Norwich. But while the affinity of the “New Divinity” with Pelagianism has been well understood by considerate men for some time past, it has not been commonly believed that there is also a striking resemblance in the modern theories to the doctrines of the ancient Socinians. This will, however, be remarkably evident by a perusal of the Racovian Catechism, which contains the acknowledged standard of Socinian doctrine; and even from the extracts here given, the coincidence between the two systems is exceedingly manifest. This, however, ought to be asserted with some exception; for it is true that in several points the Socinian creed stops far short of the “New Divinity.” This last makes no scruple to assert the complete ability of man, in all respects, to do the will of God, and that by the exercise of his own free agency; but in the catechism which we have had under consideration it is taught that the strength or ability of man is very small; and it is not pretended that he can do anything without divine aid: and although they fall far short of the truth, yet they admit that there is need, not only of external divine aid, but of that which is internal also.

Whether the “New Divinity” will maintain the consistency of the Socinianism of Poland, remains to be proved; but there is much reason to apprehend, that although the theologians who now advocate it will not have the courage to carry it out in its legitimate consequences, yet their successors will be less timid, and will feel that, in self-defence, it is necessary to go a great deal further in the line of deviation from orthodoxy than has yet been done. Whoever lives to see another generation of men rising to maturity, will see that the “New Divinity” is the stepping-stone to German neology.

## ESSAY XI.

# THE POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE.

PUBLISHED IN 1840.

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THE appearance of a new edition of the standard work of President Edwards on the Freedom of the Will, furnishes an occasion, which we are glad to embrace, of calling the attention of our readers to one particular part of the subject which has of late been a matter of frequent debate.

No attentive and competent observer of the controversies which of late years have harassed the church, will dispute that in a great measure they turn upon the nature and functions of the human will. It is as evident that the chief of these questions, on which all others hinge, is that which relates to the Power of Contrary Choice. It will be agreed that whatever goes to determine concerning the reality, nature and operations of this power, does in that degree determine the controversy itself. In the hope of contributing to this happy result, the ensuing inquiry will be conducted. No valuable progress can be made in it, unless it is pursued with a clear conception of the real point at issue. Our first endeavour, therefore, shall be to ascertain precisely what that point is.

1. The question is not whether the will might have made a choice the contrary of that actually made, had its motives, either internal or external, or both united, been different; i. e. had the state of the agent's mind within, or the outward inducements presented to it, been different. No one disputes that on this supposition there might have been a choice different from, or contrary to, that actually made. No one disputes that should such a change subsequently occur, it might produce a corresponding change of choice.

2. The question is not whether there is a mere natural power of contrary choice, as the phrase "natural power" has been understood by the best theologians. By this is meant that such a contrary choice would not be extrinsic or contradictory to its nature as will. Such a choice, supposing the requisite influence for its



production, would be a proper act of will, germane to its nature, and involving no inherent absurdity or self-contradiction. It would involve no increase of its faculties or powers, no change in its organic structure, or appropriate nature as will. Had it chosen the contrary, this would not have proved or implied it to be a larger, stronger, or constitutionally different faculty. When men turn to the love of God, they do it with the same faculties which were employed in hating him, both as to extent and nature. The state and action of these faculties towards moral objects alone are changed. The question is not whether, in this sense, the human will is endowed with the power of contrary choice.

3. The question is not whether the will, in one and the same act of choice, may or may not choose two contrary objects. This is too palpably absurd to be maintained, and none avowedly or intentionally contend for it. Whether some theories do not involve this position in such a degree that they stand or fall with it, is a fair question for discussion.

4. The question is not whether men may choose whichever of two objects they please. Those who do not examine carefully, are often made to believe that this is the grand question at issue. No one doubts the affirmative of this question.

5. Neither is the question whether the will has liberty of choice, i. e. in every act of choice acts freely, according to the pleasure of the agent, and not by constraint or compulsion. This is agreed on all hands.

6. But the question is whether the will is so constituted, that, at the moment of any given choice, under precisely the same motives of inward inclination and external inducement, it may turn itself either way; either in the way it actually does choose, or the opposite; either in accordance with its highest pleasure or inclination, or in direct and utter hostility to them. And whether such a property in the human will be essential to liberty, moral agency, praise and blame, rewards and punishments; a question which lies at the very root, as will be perceived, of some of the chief questions in divinity and ethics.

That we may not be obnoxious to the charge of raising a false issue, and fighting a fiction of our own fancy, we shall quote from the abettors of the notion in question, a few sentences showing clearly what are the views of this subject widely entertained and propagated at the present day.

Their cardinal doctrine on this subject is thus expressed, by a leading advocate of it: "Choice in its very nature implies the possibility of a different or contrary election to that which is made."\* This "possibility," as this writer explains himself, refers not to its having different objects put at its election, so that it may choose whichever it pleases; but it refers to the possibility of making the mind's choices themselves different or contrary to what actual-

\* Beecher's Views in Theology, pp. 31, 32.

ly occur, at the same instant, under precisely the same internal and external motives, and the same objects offered to their election. For he says, "the question of free will is not whether men choose. This is notorious, none deny it."\* Again—"Free-agency is known and defined by the confession itself, and admitted to be the capacity of choice, with power of contrary choice."† And in various forms he abundantly asserts, that "choice" and "voluntariness" are not a sufficient ground of accountability, unless the mind not only chooses, but exerts a "control" over its own choices.

Another writer speaks of "a will which has not its nature correlated to any objects, but a will indifferent, for if its nature were correlated to objects, its particular selection and determination would be influenced by this, and consequently its action would be necessary."‡

Again: "The only escape from necessity, therefore, is the conception of will as above defined—a conscious self-moving power, which may obey reason in opposition to passion, or passion in opposition to reason, or obey both in their harmonious union; and lastly, which may act in the indifferency of all, that is, act without reference either to reason or passion."§ Again: "The reason and the sensitivity do not determine the acts of the will. The will has efficiency, or creative and modifying power in itself—self-moved, self-directed."||

A few sentences from a publication recently discontinued, in further explication of the properties of this power of contrary choice, claimed to be essential to true liberty, will suffice under this head. "We know that a moral system necessarily implies the existence of free agents, with the power to act in despite of all opposing power. This fact sets human reason at defiance, in every attempt to prove that some of these agents will not use that power and actually sin.¶ "This possibility that moral agents will sin, remains (suppose what else you will), so long as moral agency remains; and how can it be proved that a thing *will not* be, when, for aught that appears, it *may* be? When in view of all the facts and evidence in the case, it remains true that it *may* be, what evidence or proof can exist that it *will not* be?"\*\* Again: "It will not be denied that free moral agents can do wrong under every possible influence to prevent it. The possibility of a contradiction in supposing them to be prevented from doing wrong is therefore demonstrably certain." But we will not weary our readers with a more prolix detail of extracts, which might be multiplied to any extent. Most of them are familiar with these. It is notorious with what ingenuity, zeal and industry these sentiments have been defended and propagated in every variety of form, and what multitudes have been brought, either to espouse them with enthusiasm, or submit to them in silence.

\* Beecher's Views in Theology, p. 32.

† Tappan, Review of Edwards, p. 221.

¶ Christian Spectator, 1831, p. 417.

‡ Id., p. 91.

§ Id., p. 227.

\*\* Id., 1830, p. 563.

|| Id., p. 244.

While the first of the writers quoted teaches that it belongs to the very nature of choice, that there should be a capacity of producing contrary choice, and that without this "control" of the mind over its own choices, there is no true freedom, moral agency or accountability; the second clearly avows that indifference of will towards the objects either of reason or desire, without which this faculty is rather a metaphysical figment than a living reality, and maintains that no other constitution of the will can exempt us from the despotism of fatal necessity: while in the last series of extracts we reach the climacteric, to which the doctrine necessarily rises by the demands of logical consistency, viz., that it belongs to the very essence of moral agency, that the will is of such a nature or in such a state as to be able to sin "despite of all opposing power." And that this is no mere theory, but an awful fact in their estimation, is evident, because they advance it to account for the introduction of sin into the world—strongly arguing that God would have excluded it, if he could have done so without destroying moral agency. From all which it is most manifest that the will, according to their conception of it, cannot, without the loss of accountability, moral agency, and merit of praise or blame, be put in such a state that it may not sin, in spite of all the motives and influences without and within the man, which the Almighty can employ to prevent it. Such is the power of contrary choice, extensively and confidently asserted in these days to be requisite to moral agency. This notion we propose to discuss so far as the space allotted to us will permit.

No evidence has yet been adduced of the existence of such a property in the human will. The only evidence of the existence of mental attributes, which sound philosophers have deemed admissible, is those mental operations which presuppose the faculty in question. Thus we judge men to possess reason and understanding, because we recognize in them exercises of reason and intelligence. We conclude that they are endowed with consciences, because they take cognizance of right and wrong in moral actions. We attribute to them the faculty of will because they choose. And adhering to this Baconian method of philosophising by induction of facts (and on any other system what can prevent any dreaming speculator from endowing the human soul with an endless number of fictitious attributes?) what legitimate evidence is furnished of the existence of such a faculty of contrary choice, as we are now canvassing? That men choose as they do choose, all admit, and of course maintain the existence of a faculty adequate thereto. But that they choose the contrary of what they choose, none contend. How then can they contend for the existence of a faculty in all respects adequate to do what confessedly is never done?

Neither does consciousness testify to the existence of any such faculty, though most of all relied on and appealed to bear such testimony. But this is a vain refuge. For consciousness is the mind's cognizance of its own operations; it never beholds naked,



abstract faculties separate from their workings. It discerns them in and by these workings, and so becomes conscious of their existence and nature. This, and nothing else, is the office of consciousness. How then can it be cognizant of operations which do not exist? It may be conscious indeed of having been able to choose differently, had it so pleased—because such has ever been the law of its choice. Will any one pretend that it is conscious of a power to choose contrariwise, its ruling inclination or pleasure being and continuing to choose as it has chosen, or that such a faculty would be any desirable addition to the moral endowments of men; or lend any new aid, finish or grace to moral agency?

Neither is any evidence of such a power contained in the intuitive convictions of men, as to what is requisite to moral agency and accountability. For however it may be requisite in order to men's being responsible, that they be able to do as they please or choose; yet who will claim that it is deemed necessary that they should have the property of choosing the exact contrary of what on the whole appears to them most eligible and desirable? So far from being essential to, would not such a property be declared by them destructive of all responsibility?

There is decisive evidence that such a property of the human will does not exist. For that which is contended for is not merely that the will may put forth a choice the contrary of what actually occurs, supposing such a change to occur in its circumstances as would induce it (which all admit), but that in precisely the case in which it exercises a given choice, it is fully adequate to a contrary election. Now this contrary choice is actually made or it is not: if it is made, then the will chooses the contrary of what it does choose, which is self-contradiction; if it is not made, then those conditions were wanting in it as a cause, which were indispensable to the effect, and in the absence of which it was inadequate to the effect. It is a trifling evasion to answer that the will could have chosen otherwise had it been so inclined: this is not the point in hand. The thing contended for is that it might have chosen otherwise at all events, whether inclined or not, and in spite of all opposing inclination, yea, in spite of all opposing power, even of Omnipotence: and that this is essential to moral agency. It might as well be said that scales could turn the opposite way, if induced by a preponderating weight. And does this illustration adequately exhibit all that is intended by that famous power of contrary choice, which has been so largely spoken of, as bringing in a new era in the philosophy of theology?

Neither is it any answer to say that this reasoning is inconclusive in regard to such a faculty as is now contended for: by which its advocates mean a cause unlike all others, and which they variously define as a "self-active," "self-originating," "self-determining," "selecting" cause. For it did either thus of itself enact, originate, determine or select a choice the contrary of what it did, which is plain contradiction; or it did not: and therefore wanted some con-

dition the presence of which was indispensable to that effect, and the absence of which rendered the cause inadequate to the effect—as really though not as blamelessly, or in such a degree so, as is the hand to lift a mountain.

But again, all will doubtless admit, that although the natural faculty of will exerts the choice, the direction of that choice under given outward motives, is determined, not by the bare natural faculty, but by its moral state. Thus the faculty of will equally in good and bad men exerts their volitions: but their moral goodness or badness determines the direction and quality of those choices. To deny this, is to deny, confound and utterly vacate the distinction in theology between natural and moral ability. If then the will is in a given moral state, how can it be a property of it to put forth choices of an opposite moral character? Is this a real requisite or desirable appendage to moral agency?

Such a property of the human will really amounts to the liberty of indifference. For if the will be in a condition, by which it is fitted or liable to turn either way, then it cannot be already inclined by a preponderating bias in one direction: for this is but saying that it chooses the contrary of its own preference. This difficulty is attempted to be evaded, but not answered, by alleging that although the will may not choose contrary to its own inclination, yet it may reverse that inclination. But let it be explained how this inclination can be reversed without choosing contrary to it. Suppose, however, it might. Then surely that property or function of will which thus reverses its own ruling bias, must at least itself be free from the power of that bias, or it would never incline against it, and work its destruction. It must therefore at least be in a state of equipoise or indifference as to the objects of choice.

As we have already seen, one leading advocate of this notion, clearly discerning this consequence, boldly marches up to it, and embraces it, and contends that such a freedom of will as involves its indifference either to the objects of reason or passion, in short a will void of all “correlation” to other objects, is essential to freedom from that necessity which destroys moral agency and accountability. But it deserves to be considered, whether the will does not by every act of choice pass out of this indifference, into a decided inclination toward some object: and, by consequence, whether after the first choice it can ever be endowed with that glorious indifference which is essential to moral agency and accountability, or on this system can be responsible for any of its acts. And we would inquire further, how it can make any first choice between objects, while in a state of perfect equipoise between them: why should it move towards either more than towards anything else, or why should it not remain motionless, if there is no “correlation,” no ground of affinity and attraction between them? Or could such motion be referred to anything besides the purest contingency and hap-hazard, or possess any property of a rational and accountable

act? On this scheme all moral agency and accountability would be exorcised from the universe.

Another class of advocates, hedged in by a view of this thicket of absurdities, have taken ground more cautiously. Wishing to navigate clear of the quicksands of indifference on the one hand, and, on the other, to limit moral action to the workings of this favourite power of choice with power of contrary choice, they have struck upon the rock of self-love. They teach us, not that the will moves from indifference, but that "self-love is the primary cause or reason of all acts of choice that fix supremely on any object." And they maintain that this self-love has no moral character, but only the choices prompted by it. At first sight this has the appearance of accounting for the acts of the will, not by a good or evil bias within it, but without it, and void of moral quality. But let it be considered whether this solution, instead of disentangling the scheme, does not involve it in deeper perplexity. For how can "self-love be the primary cause or reason of all acts of choice or preference," unless the will is so constituted as to follow its leadings? If it cannot, then if there be any truth in the doctrine, it is always a law of the will's choices that it should choose that object which appears to minister most to self-love. For suppose it to reject that which offers more, and to elect in preference that which offers less to self-love, it of course chooses in view of the perceived difference between the two; that difference in this case is so much denial to self-love. Therefore self-love could not have been the "cause or reason" of such an act of choice. Hence it is demonstrable that if "self-love be the primary cause of all acts of choice," these acts must be according to its promptings. They cannot therefore be the contrary of them. Where then shall we look for the capacity of contrary choice? And how does this scheme get rid of that bias in the will, or "correlation" to self-love, or uniform law of action, which are deemed so pregnant with fatalism, because fatal to free agency? And if self-love has no moral quality in any state or degree of it which determines the will, if all its choices are merely imperate acts of desires having no moral quality, then how can they have moral quality themselves? However biased in regard to objects void of moral quality, must it not remain eternally indifferent to moral objects? And are not all moral agency and accountability thus swept from the universe? And is this conferring on moral agency any new attribute of dignity, or element of perfection? The self-love scheme might easily be traced out to more absurd and ruinous consequences. But we confine ourselves to those which bear upon the power of contrary choice.

This scheme involves all the absurdities which attach to the notion of the self-determining power of the will as held by the old Arminians. For little value can be put upon a power of the mind to choose either way, unless it can determine which of the two choices in question it will put forth. Will they who assert a power



in the mind to choose in given circumstances the opposite of what it does choose, tell us how this power could be made available without the mind's choosing to make it so; how its actual choice could be in a condition either to be exercised or avoided, unless it were so that the mind chose to exercise it, and could choose not to exercise it; or how, on their principles, the mind could be responsible for it, without such a liberty as this implies? The question involves its own answer. They never can. This control of the mind over its own choices which they claim, is surely a mere nullity, unless that mind chooses those choices. If then a free act of choice has not moral quality in its own nature, but can only acquire it from a previous act of choice, the same is true of that previous choice, also of its forerunner, and so on ad infinitum till we reach a choice before the first choice in order to find moral responsibility, and indeed chase it out of being. We go from link to link and never find a staple; we sound from depth to depth and find no bottom, for bottom there is none, neither can there be in this sea of absurdities.

Some of these metaphysicians have been fully aware that the power of contrary choice contended for, was none other than the self-determining power, and have accordingly undertaken to vindicate this doctrine of self-determination from the insuperable objections which lie against it. They allege that it is not obnoxious to the absurdity of choosing choices; because, like all other causes, it is its nature in working an effect to "select"\* its object. That the will selects its objects, and that such is its nature, all agree. But this is not the question. As one of these writers says, "that men choose is notorious, none deny it." The inquiry is not whether different objects are put at men's election, or whether they could choose differently if they pleased; but whether in a given state, all things remaining the same, their choice may be either way, even the contrary of what it is. We object, that in order to this, it must choose between its choices. The answer is, "by no means; for like all other causes it selects its objects." By this one of two things must be meant; either that it is its nature to "select" the objects it does choose—then where is the capacity of contrary choice or "selection?" or it "selects" which "selection" it will make between two opposite objects; in other words, chooses its choices. So much for this evasion.

Such a property of the human will as we are now discussing makes mere and blind contingency the final determinant of its choices. For it teaches that it is inconsistent with moral agency, that the will should have any such ruling bias toward given objects, as effectually and infallibly to prevent its choosing the opposite. Not even Omnipotence itself can thus prevent it, without infringing upon moral agency. If then it be requisite to free action, that the will should be void of all bias or relation to any objects, which

\* Tappan, Review of Edwards, p. 185.

will decisively direct its choices toward them : if, as has been shown already, according to this scheme, it must be in a state of equipoise or indifference ; then most clearly the will is not determined either way by anything without or within itself, being instated in sublime equipoise or indifference above them all. To what then but the blindest fortuity can they be referred ? And where is the survey of those vast Providential dispensations which hang on the choices of moral agents, except, as one has said, in "all-powerful contingencies ?"\*

Such a property, so far from being requisite to, utterly subverts all moral agency and accountability. For, as has already been shown, it drives all moral responsibility out of the world, by pushing it to a choice back of the first choice. It makes choice proceed from indifference and blind contingency ; and what moral qualities can be attached to that which by its very terms has no quality, is neither one thing nor the other, is blank nonentity or blind contingency ? To state the case familiarly : If at any moment a choice may spring up within us, "despite all opposing power," all strength of inclination and force of persuasion which I may have of myself, or omnipotence can work, how can I be responsible for it, more than for an involuntary spasm of the nerves ?

We go still further, and assert that a kind of necessity is requisite to the very freedom of actions, and cannot be divorced from them without destroying or impairing that freedom. For is not a free act one which possesses certain qualities ? If then such an action as is possessed of such qualities, and no other, is free, it follows that if a given choice be free it must be such an action and no other. For example : let any person choose freely what his inclination would prompt, as to property, location, opportunities of study or usefulness, and would not such a choice, if free, be some given thing to the exclusion and rejection of its opposite ? and could a choice, if free and "unhindered by fatal coercion," elect and prefer one thing or its opposite, e. g., affluence or poverty, at the same moment ? On this point we may safely appeal to human consciousness. The question speaks its own answer. Thus in order to freedom in the manner and quality of an action, there must be a necessity as to its event ; a necessity that it be as it is and not otherwise. Thus, if you choose freely between two objects, there is one on which that choice will fall ; nay, cannot but fall without losing its freedom. This conclusion cannot be escaped without plunging into blind contingency as the determiner of the will. This pretended competency of the will, to one choice or its opposite, as effectually destroys all true freedom, as would a denial of freedom to choose whatever it pleases ; nay, it is one and the same thing. So true is that fundamental position of Calvinism, which, so far as we are informed, all Calvinistic writers have maintained ; that in respect to the choices of moral agents, there is freedom as

\* President Day.

to the manner, and necessity or fixedness as to the event of them ; and the one involves the other. Neander has beautifully expressed Augustine's doctrine thus : " On the highest point of moral elevation, freedom and necessity coincide."\* So our Protestant confessionst each that although " God unchangeably ordains whatsoever comes to pass," yet he does it so that " violence is not offered to the *will* of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." And again : " Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decrees of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly ; yet by the same providence he ordereth them to fall out, according to the nature of the second causes, either necessarily, freely, or ' contingently.' " By " contingently," is meant, as another article teaches, not that any " thing to God is contingent or uncertain ; " but, as these confessions assert, " according to the nature of second causes," by which is meant that to them the actions are contingent or avoidable if they choose to avoid them ; not that their choices are liable to be of a given thing or its opposite, for they teach that the choices themselves are immutably foreknown and determined ; yet not so as to impair but establish their liberty, for the manner of them also is immutably fixed.

This is precisely the view we have maintained ; that freedom as to manner, and necessity as to event, stand or fall together. And this is what Dr. Twisse, prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, not only means, but laboriously argues, in the context of that famous passage, in which he says, " contingently means avoidably, as every university scholar knows," which has been so abundantly quoted to prove that he and with him the Assembly of Divines, and their venerable confessions, held to the power of contrary choice, in the sense contended for in the late controversies among us. It is worthy of observation too, that in the very next page, Dr. Twisse confines this power of avoiding evil to particular purposes and acts of abstaining from given sins ; while he expressly asserts that " fallen man has no power to abstain from them in a gracious and holy manner." Thus Judas, had he chosen, could have refrained from betraying Christ, but not in a holy manner, that is, from principles of faith and love. In other words, it was perfectly consistent with Judas's continuing a wicked man, that it should have pleased him to refrain from his act of treachery ; and had it thus pleased him he could and would have abstained from it. But there is no conceivable act or state of the natural man, no desire of salvation, or resolutions to be holy, which do or can produce faith and love. There is a gulf between the two which nothing can fill, but the renewing work of the Holy Ghost. Now it is notorious that the power of contrary choice has been chiefly handled in reference to one point ; viz., to establish the ability of the unrenewed man to turn himself to God, and make a new heart, without Divine

\* Bib. Repository, 1833, p. 96.



Grace, and that other points interwoven are merely collateral and subordinate to this. Whatever else Twisse meant by "avoidable," he directly denies this, almost in the same sentence. Is it altogether just to hold him forth as its champion? If many of our "University scholars," aye, and teachers too, were more conversant with his treatises, and those of other kindred defenders of the faith, it would go far to prepare the way of the Lord, and restore the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The most perfect moral agents in being are destitute of this property in question, which is asserted to be requisite to moral agency. Such is God, all whose acts are immutably (freely as to the manner yet necessarily as to the event) determined by perfect wisdom and goodness. It is impossible for God to lie. He cannot deny himself. Is not he supremely excellent, and deserving of praise? To deny this is to deny his perfections, and blaspheme his name! The elect angels can never become the subjects of sinful choices. Regenerate men, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, cannot prevalingly sin, or utterly fall away. Are they not moral agents? Are they the less excellent and praiseworthy, for being so inflexibly holy, that they cannot become the prey of sin and Satan? But you say they can lapse into sin if they please. Indeed! can they unless it be their pleasure so to do? Dare you question that it will always be their pleasure to abide holy? If not, where is the possibility of their apostasy? This is the very point at issue; whether it ever will or can be their pleasure to lapse? Will you presume to suggest that their powers of moral agency would be improved by such a liability? But you say there can be no merit or worthiness in their standing if they have not power to fall. That they have power to fall, if they choose or please, none dispute. But if they will not choose or be pleased to fall, is there no worthiness in such a character? Then is there none in the Universe. So this notion, like all other errors in theology, cannot be maintained without striking at the Deity himself. It puts his unchangeable holiness in jeopardy and doubt. The foregoing reasons satisfy us that such a power of contrary choice as that which has been canvassed is no indispensable property of moral agency. We will briefly advert to some of the methods adopted to give this notion currency and popularity.

Its advocates speak of the opposite view as if it implied that men were compelled to act, to sin, or to be holy, against their wills. They abound in phraseology like this: If there is no possibility of a contrary choice; if men are compelled to act as they do by fatal necessity; if their inability is not wholly in their aversion of will, if it is something which no purity of desire or purpose can remove, and the like, then they are not accountable. Whereas our view is exposed to no such objection; for it implies that there is no supposable, prevailing will, desire or choice, contrary to the actual choice. Otherwise the actual choice would be omitted, and the contrary put forth. Their system, if any, is in fact obnoxious to

this charge. For it supposes that choices may spring up contrary to prevailing inclination, yea, "all opposing power." And yet the changes are ever ringing on this idea of compulsion contrary to their will, to bewilder careless theologians, and the more careless multitude.

They set it forth in glaring colours as stoicism, fatalism, heathenish destiny, and are abundant in such words as fatal necessity, adamantine bonds of fate, &c. They noise them abroad with great frequency, variety and emphasis, as if they were of vital importance to their cause.

Our present limits forbid any inquiry into the doctrines of the ancient Stoics and Fatalists. But we beg leave to say that these startling words neither answer nor constitute an argument. Neither do they prove the identity of our doctrine with any held by the Stoics and Fatalists: neither, if that were proved, does it of itself prove its untruth, unless every sentiment ever held by their schools is to be concluded false, to the suppression of all further inquiry; which few will be bold to assert. And if it be incumbent on some, is it not so on all, not to resort to "other means than truth and argument" in this controversy?

It is much insisted on and reiterated, that if their doctrine be denied, then there is no further use of endeavours to attain virtue in ourselves, or of employing means, endeavours, and persuasions to promote it in others. This is plausible, and strongly seizes the sympathies of men. But let us examine whether this difficulty does not press with more crushing weight on their own scheme. For if the will be without bias or "correlation" to any object, if it be liable to choose either way, in spite of all motive and inducement, and all internal inclination, which Omnipotence itself can work, of what avail is it to employ means and persuasions with such an agent? Were it not as hopeful and rational to expostulate with the idle wind, which bloweth where it listeth, and none can tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth? But in the orthodox scheme, there are some characteristical susceptibilities in man to which appeals can be hopefully addressed. The impenitent even, if not peculiarly obdurate, can be persuaded to refrain from external impurity and vice; and by the efficacious grace of the Spirit can be "effectually softened, bowed and renewed, as to hear the word with gladness, obey, and live." Our only and our sufficient encouragement to preach the Gospel to every creature is, that God can make them willing to embrace it in the day of his power. Are there any who rely on any other encouragement? If so, let them avow it. If not, why tax our scheme with a perplexity which confessedly burdens their own?

Lastly and pre-eminently, the chief allurements by which this scheme has fascinated multitudes of young ministers, and others, is to be found in its vaunting airs of new light and discovery in religion, and being the only true philosophy. This after all is the occult enchantment, the magic wand by which it has spelled

throngs of votaries. And it is precisely this which needs to be dissipated, before a respectful hearing can be gained in behalf of the true system, however masterly and irrefragable the style in which it may be defended. That it has reared up a generation of preachers who pride themselves on their philosophic insight, and extensively given birth to a style of preaching, in which the dry bones of lifeless metaphysical subtleties have had an undue proportion to the milk and meat of God's word, which feeds his church, is undeniable. But in view of the foregoing considerations, it is for our readers to decide, whether the holders of this scheme do indeed exhibit that extraordinary philosophical acumen, that rare genius for solving metaphysical problems, that unexampled insight into the true structure of the mind, which they would fain pretend. We submit whether any theory ever advanced by the wildest sciolist, or most transcendent transcendentalist, surpasses this for crude absurdities, and glaring self-contradiction; and when we hear the flourish of trumpets about new light and unparalleled discovery, we submit to any one tolerably versed in the past controversies of the church, whether there be anything in this doctrine, or its attendant sisterhood of errors, which has not, from the time of Pelagius till now, alternately infested the church, and been exorcised from it, as God has seen fit to try his people, or to deliver them with an outstretched arm. And we submit also to men's sober judgments, without comment, the fulsome pretensions which have been so largely made to intellectual greatness and superiority, in the case of those competent to invent or defend such a scheme as this; as also the free imputations of dulness or insanity, or some other malformation, in the case of those minds which cannot perceive its beauties, or lend it their sanction. Indeed, any scheme which prides and vaunts itself much on its great display of metaphysical tact, and philosophic wonders, does so far forth evince its inconsistency with the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. For this is no philosopheme of men, but a testimony of God, which brings to naught the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the prudent. It teaches us that "vain philosophy" "spoils" men. True philosophy takes the yoke and learns of Christ, as a disciple of his master. Spurious philosophy is an usurper in the city of the great King, commanding what Christ may and may not teach, and thus lords it over our faith.

It will be perceived that in the several heads of this disquisition we have barely struck and opened veins of thought, without exhausting them, each of which would yield a rich reward to the most patient and thoroughgoing inquiry. We have a deep and deliberate conviction, a conviction strengthened by every day's experience, that this point is the hinge on which the chief theological differences that agitate our Zion turn; and that there will be no relief, no sufficient check to those errors which have harassed the church, until the truth on this subject is clearly settled.

It seems too plain, indeed, to be questioned, that if it be essential



to moral agency, that it be a property of the will to choose either way in spite of all opposing power; that it be endowed with such independence, that no "evidence or proof" can exist that it will act in a given way, not even in anything which Omnipotence can do to direct it; then there can be no proof or evidence that anything which God does or forbears to do through all eternity, is the reason or cause, positive or privative, why moral agents act as they do act. Of course the doctrine of decrees is subverted. There can be no evidence of God's providential government, as concerns the actions of free agents or things depending upon them. There can be no evidence that any work of his Spirit upon the souls of men is the reason or cause of their turning to God. Indeed, no work of any sort can be the cause of such a change in them who have power to sin despite all opposing power, for it cannot produce the change until they permit it by the very terms of the statement. Thus an end is made of efficacious grace. With this doctrine, as all know, Divine sovereignty and the orthodox view of election stand or fall. If it is indispensable to moral agency that the infallible prevention of moral agents from sinning "may involve a contradiction;" that they should not be in a state which would be incompatible with their ever sliding into apostasy; "what evidence or proof can exist" that the saints will persevere unto salvation, or that the glorified saints and angels, and even God himself, may not lapse from heavenly purity? "For," as these writers say, "how can it be proved that a thing *will* not be, when, for aught that appears, it *may* be?" A fearful prospect this for all holy intelligences! And if nothing beside the actings of this power possesses moral quality, or can be sinful or holy, then surely there can be no native or hereditary sinfulness in men, if indeed there can be any of any sort.

Is it not then clear beyond dispute, that those cardinal points of the evangelical systems, which have been so much in controversy of late, are thus shaken by this notion of contrary choice which saps and mines the foundation on which they rest? To us this is past all doubt. Having often had occasion to reason with the advocates of this new scheme, we have found them uniformly taking refuge in this notion as their impregnable citadel. They have uniformly confessed that the whole controversy hinges upon it. Is it not then of vital importance to labour to establish the true philosophy on this point; and not merely prune away the branches of this poison-tree, but lay the axe at its root?

While we build not our faith on the wisdom of men, but on the sure testimonies of God, is it not lawful, nay, obligatory, to ward off the boastful assaults of a pretended philosophy, by showing that it is "philosophy falsely so called," evincing its folly, and humbling its pride? Has not this been the method of the most successful defenders of the faith? On this subject let the illustrious Edwards, though dead, yet speak, whose own immortal treatise on this very subject is a most noble example and confirmation of what

he says.\* “There is therefore no need that the strict philosophic truth should be at all concealed; nor is there any danger in *contemplation* and *profound discovery* in these things. Indeed these things never can be well established, and the opposite errors, so subversive of the whole Gospel, which at this day so greatly and generally prevail, be well confuted, or the arguments by which they are maintained answered, till these points are settled. While this is not done, it is to me beyond doubt that the friends of those great Gospel truths will but poorly maintain their controversy with the adversaries of those truths; they will be obliged often to shuffle, hide, and turn their backs, and the latter will have a strong fort whence they can never be driven, and weapons to use, from which those who oppose them will find no shield to screen themselves; and they will always puzzle, confound, and keep under the friends of sound doctrine, and glory and vaunt themselves in their advantage over them; and carry their affairs with a high hand, as they have done already for a long time past.”

Was this written near a century ago by so accurate a draftsman as Jonathan Edwards? If it truly delineates what then was, could it better describe what now is? Who more valiant for the truth, or mighty in counsel and act for its defence, than he? Shall we not heed his counsels as well as revere his name? There is no new thing under the sun. If his history was prophecy as to the danger, shall not his counsel be so as to the remedy?

Let his testimony admonish us all to burnish and gird on our armour for a victorious conflict with false doctrine, not only in its outworks but also in this its strong citadel. While there may be a presumptuous and perilous delving into the labyrinths of

“Fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,  
To find no end in wandering mazes lost,”

there is also a safe and prudent study of them which is necessary and profitable.

Particularly ought we to master and confound all reasonings and doctrines which go, or tend, to a denial of the possibility of “that which is the true system of administration in the city of God;” that it is possible, at least, that the Maker of all things should have his creatures at his own disposal; that he may work in them, to will and to do of his own good pleasure; that he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever!

\* Works, vol. ii., p. 300. New York Edition.

## ESSAY XII.

### THE INABILITY OF SINNERS.\*

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THERE has occurred within our recollection, a considerable difference in the manner of treating this subject, especially in addresses to the impenitent from the pulpit. It was customary formerly, for Calvinistic preachers to insist much on the helpless inability of the sinner. He was represented, according to the language of the scriptures, to be "dead in trespasses and sins," and utterly unable to put forth one act of spiritual life; and too often this true representation was so given, as to leave the impression that the person labouring under this total inability was not culpable for the omission of acts which he had no power to perform. The fact of man's being a free accountable agent was not brought into view with sufficient prominence; and the consequence was, that in many cases the impenitent sinner felt as if he were excusable; and the conclusion was too commonly adopted, that there was no encouragement to make any effort until it should please a sovereign God to work. And if at any time the zealous preacher urged upon his hearers in private the duty of repentance, he was sure to hear the echo of his own doctrines; we are incapable of doing anything until God shall be pleased to work in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure;" it is useless for us to attempt anything. We do not say that the inability of man was so represented by all as to produce these impressions, for we know that by some, not only man's dependence, but also his duty, was distinctly and forcibly inculcated.

Some excellent men, who saw the danger of so insisting on the inability of man as to furnish an apology for the careless sinner, borrowed a little aid from the Arminian scheme, and taught that if the sinner would do what was in his power, and continue faithfully to use the outward means of grace, the Spirit of God would assist his endeavours: and thus a connection was formed between the strivings of the unregenerate and the grace of God. But this was not consistent with the other opinions of these men, and involved

\* Published in 1831, in review of the following work:—"An Inquiry into that inability under which the sinner labours, and whether it furnishes any excuse for his neglect of duty."



them in many practical difficulties, and contradicted many clear passages of scripture, which teach that "without faith it is impossible to please God:" and it seemed to be obviously absurd, that the promise of grace should be made to acts and exercises which, it could not be denied, were in their nature sinful. Some, indeed, spoke of a kind of sincerity which they supposed an unregenerate sinner might possess; but it was found difficult to tell what it was; and another difficulty was to quiet the minds of those convinced sinners who had been long using the means of grace. Such persons would allege that they had prayed, and read, and heard the word for a long time, and yet received no communications of grace. To such, nothing could on this plan be said, but to exhort them to wait God's time, and to entertain the confident hope that no soul ever perished, that continued to the last seeking for mercy. The inconvenience and evil of these representations being perceived, many adopted with readiness a distinction of human ability into *natural* and *moral*. By the first they understood merely the possession of physical powers and opportunities; by the latter, a mind rightly disposed. In accordance with this distinction, it was taught that every man possessed a natural ability to do all that God required of him; but that every sinner laboured under a moral inability to obey God, which, however, could not be pleaded in excuse for his disobedience, as it consisted in corrupt dispositions of the heart, for which every man was responsible. Now this view of the subject is substantially correct, and the distinction has always been made by every person, in his judgments of his own conduct and that of others. It is recognized in all courts of justice, and in all family government, and is by no means a modern discovery. And yet it is remarkable that it is a distinction so seldom referred to, or brought distinctly into view, by old Calvinistic authors. The first writer among English theologians that we have observed using this distinction explicitly, is the celebrated Dr. Twisse, the prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and the able opposer of Arminianism, and advocate of the Supralapsarian doctrine of divine decrees. It was also resorted to by the celebrated Mr. Howe, and long afterwards used freely by Dr. Isaac Watts, the popularity of whose evangelical writings probably had much influence in giving it currency. It is also found in the theological writings of Dr. Witherspoon, and many others, whose orthodoxy was never disputed. But in this country no man has had so great an influence in fixing the language of theology, as Jonathan Edwards, president of New Jersey College. In his work on "The Freedom of the Will," this distinction holds a prominent place, and is very important to the argument which this profound writer has so ably discussed in that treatise. The general use of the distinction between natural and moral ability may, therefore, be ascribed to the writings of President Edwards, both in Europe and America. No distinguished writer on theology has made more use of it than Dr. Andrew Fuller; and it is well known that he imbibed nearly

all his views of theology from an acquaintance with the writings of President Edwards. And it may be said truly, that Jonathan Edwards has done more to give complexion to the theological system of Calvinists in America, than all other persons together. This is more especially true of New England; but it is also true to a great extent in regard to a large number of the present ministers of the Presbyterian church. Those, indeed, who were accustomed either to the Scotch or Dutch writers, did not adopt this distinction, but were jealous of it as an innovation, and as tending to diminish, in their view, the miserable and sinful state of man, and as derogatory to the grace of God. But we have remarked, that in almost all cases where the distinction has been opposed as false, or as tending to the introduction of false doctrine, it has been misrepresented. The true ground of the distinction has not been clearly apprehended; and those who deny it have been found making it themselves in other words; for that an inability depending on physical defect, should be distinguished from that which arises from a wicked disposition, or perverseness of will, is a thing which no one can deny who attends to the clear dictates of his own mind; for it is a self-evident truth, which even children recognize in all their apologies for their conduct. We do not assert, however, that the dispute between the advocates and opposers of this distinction has been a mere logomachy. There is one important point of difference. They who reject the distinction, maintain that if we have lost any physical ability to perform our duty by our own fault, the obligation to obedience remains, although the ability to execute it is utterly lost; while the advocates of the distinction between natural and moral ability hold that obligation and ability must be of equal extent; and although they admit that we are accountable for the loss of any faculty which takes place through our fault, yet the guilt must be referred entirely to the original act, and no new sin can be committed for not exercising a faculty which does not exist, or which is physically incapable of the actions in question. To illustrate this point, let us suppose the case of a servant cutting off his hands to avoid the work required of him. The question then is, is this servant guilty of a crime for not employing those members which he does not possess? It is admitted that he is chargeable with the consequences of his wicked act, but this only goes to show the greater guilt of that deed. It is also true, that if the same perverse disposition which led to this act is still cherished, he is virtually guilty of the neglect of that obedience which was due. Sin consists essentially in the motives, dispositions, and volitions of the heart, and the external act only possesses a moral nature by its connection with these internal affections. But it cannot be truly said that a man can be guilty of a crime in not using hands which he does not possess. Let us suppose this servant to have become truly penitent, and to have nothing in his mind but a strong desire to do his duty; can any impartial man believe that he commits a sin in not doing the work which he has no hands to execute?

We think not. The case will appear more evident, if the faculty lost should be one which is essential to moral agency ; as if a man should by his own fault deprive himself of reason. It is manifest that a man totally destitute of reason is incapable of any moral acts ; and this is equally true, however this defect may have been contracted. If a man performs an act by which he knows reason will be extinguished or perverted, he is guilty in that act of a crime which takes its measure, in part, from the consequences likely to ensue. Thus in the case of the drunkard ; he who destroys his reason by ebriety, may be considered as guilty of an act, the guilt of which has respect to all the probable consequences. In human courts we are aware that intoxication cannot be pleaded as a justification of crime ; but on this subject it may be observed, that drunkards are not commonly so destitute of a knowledge of right and wrong as to be deprived of their moral agency. And again, it would be of dangerous consequence to admit the principle, that a man might plead one crime in justification of another ; and it would be exceedingly liable to abuse, as a man might become intoxicated for the very purpose of committing a great crime, or he might affect a greater degree of intoxication than was real ; so that it is a sound political maxim, that a man shall be held responsible for all acts committed in a state of ebriety. But *in foro conscientiae*, we cannot but view the matter in a different light. If by an intoxicating liquor reason is completely subverted, and the man is no longer himself, we cannot judge that he is as accountable for what he does, as when in his sober senses. You may accumulate as much guilt as you will on the act of extinguishing or perverting his reason ; but you cannot think that what he madly perpetrates under the influence of strong drink, is equally criminal as if committed while reason was in exercise. This we take to be the deliberate judgment of all impartial men.

The most difficult question relative to this matter is, whether ignorance and error do wholly, or in any degree exculpate from the guilt of actions committed under their influence. On this subject, it has been customary to distinguish ignorance (and all error is only a species of ignorance) into voluntary and involuntary. The former, however great, does not excuse ; the latter, if invincible, does ; or mitigates criminality in proportion as it approximates to insuperable ignorance. But when we speak of voluntary ignorance, we do not mean that there is a deliberate volition to remain in ignorance, or that it could be removed by an act of the will ; but we mean *that* ignorance or misconception which is a part of our depravity, or a consequence of it. A mind depraved by sin is incapable of perceiving the beauty and sweetness of spiritual objects, and is therefore totally incapable of loving such objects. This ignorance constitutes an essential part of human depravity, and can never be an apology for it, nor in the least exculpate from the guilt of sins committed under its influence. It is, in fact, that very blindness of mind and unbelief of heart which lies at the foundation of



all departures from God. To which we may add, that the actual exercise of corrupt affections obscures the intellect and perverts the judgment, as has been remarked by all moralists, and the same is observable in all the common transactions of life. Ignorance or error, induced by criminal self-love or by malignant passions, forms no excuse for the evil which flows from this source; but this very ignorance and error form a part of that sinful character which belongs to the moral agent. We are aware that there has been current with many in our day, a theory which separates entirely between the intellect and will, and maintains that the former in its operations is incapable of virtue or vice; and to corroborate this opinion, a distinction has been made of the powers of the soul itself, into natural and moral. By this division, the understanding or intellect belongs to the former class, the will and affections to the latter. According to this hypothesis, all sin consists in voluntary acts or in the exercise of the will, and the understanding is incapable of moral obliquity, because it is not a moral faculty. They who have adopted this theory (and they are many) entertain the opinion, that depravity consists very much in the opposition of the heart to the dictates of the understanding. In regeneration, according to them, there is no illumination of the understanding by the Holy Spirit. This, according to the theory under consideration, is altogether unnecessary. This work, therefore, consists in nothing else than giving a new heart, or a new set of feelings. If the person has received correct doctrinal instruction, no other illumination is needed; and the whole difference in the conceptions of truth, between the regenerate and unregenerate, is owing to nothing else than a change in the feelings; for as far as mere intellect is concerned, the views of the understanding are the same before regeneration as afterwards; except that a renewed heart disposing the person to the impartial love of truth, he will be more careful to collect and weigh its evidences, and will thus be preserved from errors into which the unregenerate, through the corrupt bias produced by the affections, are prone to fall.

Now against this whole method of philosophizing we enter our dissent. This total dissociation of the understanding and heart, and this entire repugnance between them, are contrary to all experience. There can be no exercise of heart which does not necessarily involve the conception of the intellect; for that which is chosen must be apprehended, and that which is loved and admired must be perceived. And although it is true that the knowledge of the unregenerate man is inefficacious, so that while he knows the truth he loves it not; yet we venture to maintain, that the reason why his knowledge produces no effect, is simply because it is inadequate. It does not present truth in its true colours to the heart. It is called speculative knowledge, and may be correct as far as it goes; but it does not penetrate the excellence and the beauty of any one spiritual object; and it may be averred, that the affections of the heart do always correspond with the real views of the under-

standing. The contrary supposition, instead of proving that man is morally depraved, would show that his rationality was destroyed. If it be alleged that this apprehension of the beauty, sweetness, and glory of spiritual things, which is peculiar to the regenerate, arises merely from the altered state of the heart, I have no objection to the statement, if by *heart* be meant the moral nature of the renewed mind; but it is reversing the order of nature and rational exercise, to suppose that we first have an affection of love to an object, and then see it to be lovely. We may ask, what excited this affection of love? If anything is known of the order of exercises in the rational mind, the perception of the qualities on which an affection terminates, is, in the order of nature, prior to the affection. The soul, in an unregenerate state, is equally incapable of seeing and feeling aright in relation to spiritual objects. And indeed, we hardly know how to distinguish between the clear perception of the beauty of an object, and the love of that object; the one might serve as a just description of the other. Not but that the intellect and heart may be distinguished; but when beauty, sweetness, excellence, and glory, or good in any of its forms, is the object of the understanding, this distinction in experience vanishes. And accordingly the schoolmen distinguished between the understanding and will, not by referring nothing to the latter but blind feeling; but by dividing all objects which could be presented to the mind, into such as were received as *true* merely, and such as were not merely apprehended as true, but as *good*. These last they considered as having relation to the will, under which all appetitive affections were included.

The Scriptures have been repeatedly appealed to, as placing all moral acts in the will; but they furnish no aid to those who make this wide distinction between understanding and will. They do often use the word *heart* for moral exercise, but not to the exclusion of the intellect. Indeed, this word in the Old Testament, where it most frequently occurs, is used for the whole soul; or for any strong exercise of the intellect, as well as the feelings. We are required to love with the understanding; and “a wise and understanding heart,” is a mode of expression which shows how little the inspired penmen were influenced by a belief of this modern theory. And, in the New Testament, to “believe with the heart,” includes the intellect as much as what is called the will. It means to believe really and sincerely; so to believe, as to be affected by what we believe, according to its nature. But is not all moral exercise voluntary, or an exercise of the will? Yes, undoubtedly; and so is all moral exercise rational, or such as involves the exercise of intellect. If the will were a moral power, as many suppose, then every volition would be of a moral nature—the instinctive preference of life to death would be moral; the choice of happiness in preference to misery, which no sentient being can avoid, would be moral. At this rate, it would follow, that mere animals are moral beings, because it is certain they possess will.

But the simple truth is, that the understanding and will stand in the same relation to the morality of actions; and the latter no more deserves to be called the moral part of our constitution than the former. The only faculty belonging to our constitution, which can properly be denominated moral, is conscience; not because its exercise furnishes the only instance of moral acts, for it may be doubted whether the monitions of this faculty partake of a moral nature; but because by this we are enabled to perceive the moral qualities of actions.

Our object in this discussion is, to establish the point, that ignorance is a part of the depravity which sin has introduced into our minds; and we maintain, in strict accordance with the Scriptures, that no unregenerate man has any adequate or true knowledge of God; nor, indeed, is he capable of such knowledge. It is a comprehensive description of the wicked, that "they know not God." "Know not the way of peace." To know the true God and Jesus Christ is eternal life. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The regenerate have the eyes of their understanding enlightened, and have been translated from darkness to the marvellous light of the Gospel. As to invincible ignorance, it is manifest that it must stand on the same footing with the want of the requisite physical powers. It is equally impossible for a man to see, whether he be deficient in the organs of vision or in light. If God has revealed his will on certain points, and in consequence has demanded our faith and obedience, the obligation to perform these duties will be co-extensive with the communication of this revelation, and no further. The heathen, therefore, will not be condemned for not believing in the Messiah, "for how could they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" This, however, will not be any excuse for not seeking after more light by every means in their power. If persons, who are surrounded by the means of instruction, obstinately neglect to avail themselves of the opportunity of knowing the will of God, they do render themselves exceedingly guilty by such perverseness, and make themselves responsible for all the omission of duty which arises from this state of obstinate ignorance.

Let us now return to the inquiry respecting natural and moral inability. We asserted that all men, and even children, were in the constant habit of making a distinction between an impediment to the doing of a thing, which arose from want of physical power, and that which depended solely on the disposition or will. But it may be useful to inquire, whether any advantage has been derived from the use of these terms; or, whether they have not rather served to perplex and mislead the people, for whose benefit they were devised. That this latter is probably a correct statement of the truth, may with some probability be presumed from the fact, that these terms are evidently falling into disuse with many who were once tenacious of them. But to render this more evident, we



would remark, that there is an obvious inaccuracy in speaking of two kinds of ability, both of which are requisite to accomplish the same object. If both are necessary to the end, then evidently either by itself is not an ability. If the strength of a man, together with a machine of a certain power, be necessary to lift a weight, it is evidently incorrect to say, that the hand of the man is able to elevate this heavy body; his strength is only an ability when combined with the machine, which is needed to give it force; so, if the mere possession of natural powers to do the commandments of God is not of itself sufficient to reach the end, it is not properly called an *ability*; it is only such when combined with what is called moral ability.

Again, the word *natural* is here used in an uncommon and technical sense; and the term being already in common use, in relation to the same subject, in a sense entirely different, it is calculated to perplex and mislead. When we say, man possesses a natural ability, we mean by the word *natural* that which is contra-distinguished from moral; that which is destitute of any moral quality; but we are accustomed to say, and the usage is derived from Scripture, that man is naturally depraved, naturally blind, naturally impotent: but in this case we mean, that which is innate; that which is constitutional; and when applied to this subject, the meaning is entirely diverse from the one stated above; for while *there*, all idea of moral character is excluded, *here* it relates to moral qualities. Man is naturally able to obey the commandments of God:—man is naturally a depraved and impotent being, are contradictions, if the word *natural* be used in the same sense, in both cases; but as intended, there is no contradiction; for the word, in the first instance, has an entirely different meaning from what it has in the second. But surely, such confusion in the use of terms should be avoided. And if you will inquire of the common people what they understand by natural ability, you will be convinced that it is a phrase which perplexes and obscures, rather than elucidates the subject. We have known instances in which clergymen of some learning, and even doctors of divinity, have understood that they who held the doctrine of man's natural ability, denied that of total depravity; whereas the fact is, that there are no sterner advocates of universal and total depravity than those who make this distinction.

But an objection of a different but not less weighty kind, lies against the use of the phrases, "moral ability" and "moral inability." By the former is meant, that state of the heart or affections which leads a person to choose to perform any act of external obedience; by the latter, the contrary, or an indisposition or unwillingness to do our duty. Now, we know that the law of God extends to the heart, and requires rectitude in every secret thought and affection; yea, the essence of obedience consists in this conformity of the heart to the law of God. But according to the import of this distinction, these internal affections are no

more than a moral ability to obey. The phrase seems to contemplate external acts only as acts of obedience, and the affections of the heart as the ability to perform them; but this is evidently incorrect. What is the sum of the obedience which the law of God requires of man? Is it not supreme and perfect love? What is moral ability? It is this very thing in which the essence of obedience consists. This moral ability should relate to something prior to love; but what ability is that which is prior to all holy affection? If you say the nature or disposition, the law requires that this be pure also, as well as the acts and exercises. There is, then, no such thing as a moral ability to obey, as distinct from obedience itself. And, again, what is moral inability but sin itself? It is the want of a right temper and a holy will—the defect of that love which the law requires; and what is this but sin? It certainly can have no other effect but to mislead, to call the essence of disobedience by the name of “moral inability.” It can be no question whether sin can furnish any excuse for disobedience. Now what is called “moral inability,” when it comes to be analyzed, is nothing but the essence of sin as it exists in the heart. Man labours under a moral inability to obey God, because he does not love him; but love is the sum and essence of all obedience; it is the same, therefore, as to say, that man in his natural state has no love to God. Man is in a state of sin, which, while it continues, must be an effectual hindrance to the service of God.

We have already remarked that the distinction of inability into *natural* and *moral*, is much less used of late, than it was some fifteen or twenty years ago. It has not answered the purpose for which it was invented. If there be a real inability which man cannot remove, it must have the effect of discouraging human exertions. Let it be conceded that it does not render man excusable; yet it does render his unassisted efforts ineffectual; therefore, they who consider it all important, not merely to fix upon the conscience the conviction of ill-desert, but to rouse the powers of the soul to action, have adopted a new method of treating this subject, which not a little alarms those who are tenacious of old notions and the ancient forms of speech. These new preachers, in their addresses to the impenitent sinner, say nothing about natural and moral inability. They preach that man is in possession of every ability which is requisite for the discharge of his duty. That it is as easy for him to repent, to exercise faith, and to love God, as to speak, or eat, or walk, or perform any other act. And men are earnestly and passionately exhorted to come up at once to the performance of their duty. Nothing is more in the power of a man, they allege, than his own will; and the consent of the will to the terms of the Gospel is all that is required to constitute any man a Christian. When sinners are awakened, and become anxious about their salvation, it is deemed by these teachers improper to manifest any sympathy with their feelings of pungent conviction; for the only reason of their re-

maining in distress, is their obstinate continuance in impenitence. All conversation with such, therefore, should assume the character of stern rebuke, and continued earnest exhortations to *submit* to God, to give up their rebellion, and to make choice of the service of God. And if any convinced sinner ventures to express the opinion, that he labours under any sort of inability to do what is required of him, he is severely reprov'd, as wishing to cast the blame of his impenitence on his Maker. And it is believed, that upon the new plan of treating awakened sinners, they are brought to the enjoyment of peace much sooner, than upon the old plan of treating them rather as unfortunate than as guilty. Men, upon being assured that salvation is in their power, are induced to make an exertion to submit to God, and do often persuade themselves that now they have complied with their duty, and have passed from death unto life. There is much reason to fear, however, that many souls, who have very slight convictions of sin, are deluded into the opinion, that they have submitted, and are reconciled to God, though they have never been led to any deep views of the dreadful sinfulness of their own hearts. And, others, who have deeper convictions, find all their own efforts unavailing; and while they confess that the fault is in the total depravity of their nature, continue to profess their inability to repent; and whatever power others may have to change the heart, are more and more convinced, that no such power belongs to them. The obstinate cases cannot but be perplexing and troublesome to the zealous preachers of full ability; but they contrive to reconcile them with their doctrine, by various methods, which it is not to our purpose to specify. Now, as a large portion of our younger theologians appear to be adopting this new theory of ability, and consider it a great improvement upon both the old Calvinistic doctrine, and also upon the Edwardean theory of natural and moral ability; and especially, as it claims a near alliance with the many revivals of religion which are now in progress in the church, it becomes a duty of high obligation to bring these opinions, which are now so widely and confidently inculcated, to the test of reason and scripture; and we trust that our readers will indulge us, while we enter, with some degree of minuteness, into the discussion. And, to give our views clearly and fully on the subject of man's ability and inability, we shall endeavour to go back to first principles, and cautiously examine those maxims, which, by most who speak on this subject, are taken for granted.

On the subject of man's moral agency and accountableness, there is no controversy.

It is also agreed by most, that an obligation to perform an act of obedience supposes the existence of the faculties or physical powers requisite for its performance. An irrational being cannot be under a moral obligation to perform a rational act. Man cannot be under obligation to do what requires powers which do not belong to his nature and constitution. For example, man could not justly be required to transport himself from earth to heaven, as the



angels do, because this exceeds the power which belongs to his nature. And it is admitted, that where there is a willingness to perform a duty, anything which renders the execution of our desire impracticable, removes the obligation. For no man can be bound to perform impossibilities. The maxim, *that obligation to obey any command supposes the existence of an ability to do the action required*, relates entirely to actions consequent upon volitions. If we appeal to the common sense, or universal judgment of mankind, on this point, we must be careful to understand precisely the common principle respecting which all men are agreed; and must be careful not to extend the maxim to other things, entirely distinct from its usual application. An infant cannot justly be required to build a house or a ship. A person of weak intellect and little invention cannot be obliged to write an elegant poem. No man can be under obligation to remember every word which he ever spoke, and every thought which ever passed through his mind. A man who has lost his hands or his feet, cannot afterwards be under a moral obligation to exercise these members. This case is so plain, and the judgment of men so uniform on the subject, that we need not dwell longer on the point.

The next thing to be inquired, is, whether this maxim applies to the ability of *willing* as well as *doing*.

And here it may be remarked, that the possession of the faculty of willing, or of choosing and refusing, is essential to a moral agent; and, therefore, a being who has no such faculty, can never be subject to a moral law. On this point there can be no difference of opinion. Neither is it supposed by any, that we have the power of avoiding an exercise of will, when an object is proposed; or when a particular action is in the contemplation of the mind; for, if we do not choose a proposed object, we of course refuse it; and if we do not determine on an action which may be suggested, we of necessity let it alone. There is here no other alternative. Hence, it is evident, that the liberty of man does not consist in the power to will or not to will. In regard to this, man may be said to lie under necessity; but it is obviously no hardship, since he is at liberty to will as he pleases. But the most important question is, has the moral agent the power of willing differently from what he does in any particular case? This is a very intricate subject, and will require close attention and an impartial judgment, in order to see clearly where the truth lies.

The word *will* is taken in a greater or less latitude. It signifies, according to some, every desire and inclination; every preference and choice. According to others, *volitions*, or the acts of the will, are properly such acts of the mind as result in some change of the body or mind. The whole active power of man consists in an ability, when he chooses to exercise it, to alter the train of thought, by turning the mind from one subject of contemplation to another; and in the ability to move the members of the body within certain limits. Let any man seriously inquire, whether he possesses any

other power or ability than this. We know that there are many things which he has no ability to perform. He cannot alter the nature of the perceptions of sense ; he cannot excite in himself affections to any objects at will. If a man wish to enkindle love in his breast to any person, he cannot possibly do more than contemplate all the traits of character which are amiable in that person, or all those circumstances which have a tendency to create an interest in the person : but it is a vain effort to endeavour to love another by the mere effort of will. If we take the word *will* in the larger sense, all clear distinction between desire and will is removed. If we call every preference an act of volition, then, obviously, will and affection are confounded ; for what is preference, but a superior affection ? and choice, if it result in no determination to act, is nothing else but preference, or the cherishing a stronger affection for one thing than another. It seems to us, therefore, to be altogether expedient, to confine the words *will* and *volition* to those distinctly marked actions, which lead to some change in body or mind. Those determinations which lead directly to action, whether of body or mind, are properly called volitions ; as when I resolve to raise my hand ; to direct my eyes to this quarter or that ; to turn my thoughts from one subject to another. These are acts which are clearly defined, and which are easily distinguishable from mere desires or emotions. A late philosophical writer has, indeed, attempted to sweep away all controversies respecting the determination of the will, by confounding will and desire together : but still he is obliged to acknowledge, that some of our desires are followed by action, or by a change in the body or mind ; and these being thus clearly distinguished by their effects, and being also the most important of all our acts, it is expedient to have them put into a class by themselves, with an appropriate denomination.

But let us return to the inquiry already instituted, which is, whether, when we will any particular thing, we have it in our power to will the contrary ? Here it will be acknowledged, at once, that a man cannot will at the same time opposite things ; for if he determines on an act, he cannot determine to let it alone. When it is asked, whether the person who wills an action had it in his power to omit it, the answer is, that if he had been so inclined, he could have willed the opposite. The very nature of a volition is, the resolving on that which is agreeable to our inclinations. To suppose any constraint or compulsion in willing, is absurd ; for then it would not be a volition. No greater liberty can be conceived, than freely to choose what we please. But if the import of the question is, whether with an inclination one way, we are able to will the very contrary ? the thing is absurd. If we were capable of such a volition, it would be a most unreasonable act. Such a self-determining power as would lead to such acts, would render man incapable of being governed by a moral law, and would subject him, so far as such a power was exercised, to the most capricious

cious control. He could no longer be said to be the master of himself; for while his whole soul was inclined to one thing, he might be led in an opposite direction, without having any reason or motive for his conduct. Such a power as this, no one, I think, will plead for, who understands its nature. Man has the power to determine his own will, but in accordance with his own inclinations—the only kind of power over the will which any reasonable being can wish. If I can will as I please, surely I need not complain that I cannot will as I do not please. If I govern my volitions by my prevailing inclination, this is surely a greater privilege, and more truly liberty, than a power to determine the will without any motive, and contrary to all my wishes. My actions are as truly my own and self-determined, when they accord with inclination, as if they could spring up without any desire. Many philosophical men, from a fear of being involved in the doctrine of necessity, have talked and reasoned most absurdly, in relation to this point. And it is to be regretted, that many writers, who have substantially maintained the true doctrine of the will, have employed language which has had the effect of confirming their prejudices. To talk of a necessity of willing as we do, although we may qualify the word by “moral,” or “philosophical,” is inexpedient. There can be no necessity in volition. It is the very opposite of necessity. It is liberty itself. Because volition has a determinate cause which makes it what it is, this does not alter the case. If the cause be a free agent, and the kind of volition be determined by the unconstrained inclinations of the heart, the freedom of our actions is no how affected, by this certain connection between volitions and their cause. The contrary doctrine involves the monstrous absurdity, that volitions have no cause, and no reason for being what they are. If, then, we can will as we please, we have all conceivable liberty and power, so far as the will is concerned. But the maxim, that no man is under obligation to do that which he has no power to perform, does not apply to the act of volition, as was before observed, but to the ability to act according to our will.

We come now to the inquiry, whether a man has a power to change the affections of his heart; or to turn the current of his inclinations in a contrary direction to that in which they run. On this subject our first remark is, that the very supposition of a person being sincerely desirous to make such a change is absurd, for if there existed a prevailing desire that our affections should not be attached to certain objects, then already the change has taken place; but while our souls are carried forth in strong affections to an object, it is a contradiction to say that that soul desires the affections to be removed from that object: for what is affection but the outgoing of the soul with desire and delight towards an object? But to suppose a desire not to love the object which has attracted our affections, is to suppose two opposite affections prevailing in the same soul at the same time, and in relation to the same object. It is true that there may exist conflicting desires in regard to the



objects which are pursued; for, while with a prevailing desire we are led on to seek them, there may, and often do, exist inferior desires which draw us, according to their force, in another direction. Thus, a drunkard may be prevailingly inclined to seek the gratification which he expects from strong drink, but while he is resolved to indulge his appetite, a regard to health, reputation, and the comfort of his family, may produce a contrary desire; but, in the case supposed, it is overcome by the stronger inclination which a vicious appetite has generated. It is also true, as has been remarked by President Edwards, that in contemplating some future time, a man may desire that the appetite or affection which now governs him may be subdued. And again, a man may be brought into such circumstances that his desire of happiness, or dread of eternal misery, may be so strong as to induce him to wish that his predominant affections might be changed; and under the powerful influence of these constitutional principles he may be led to will a change in the temper of his mind and the inclinations of his heart. The question is, whether a volition to change the desires or dispositions is ever effectual. If our philosophy of the mind be correct, this is a thing entirely out of the power of the will. Every person, however, can put the matter to the test of experience at any moment. The best way to prove to ourselves that we have a power over our affections, is to exercise it. Who was ever conscious of loving any person or thing, merely from willing to do so? What power, then, has the sinner to change his own heart? He does not love God, but is at enmity with him—how shall he change his enmity into love? You tell him that he has the power to repent and to love God, and urge him instantly to comply with his duty. Now we should be exceedingly obliged by any one who would explain the process by which a sinner changes the current of his affections. We have often tried the experiment, and have found ourselves utterly impotent to accomplish this work. Perhaps the zealous preacher of the doctrine of human ability will say it is as easy to love God, or easier than to hate him. He can only mean, that when the heart is in that state in which the exhibition of the character of God calls forth love, the exercise of love in such a soul is as easy as the exercise of enmity in one of a different moral temperament. The ability to repent and love God then amounts to no more than this, that the human faculties when rightly exercised are as capable of holy as of sinful acts, which no one, we presume, ever denied; but it is a truth which has no bearing on the point in hand. The impenitent sinner cannot sincerely will to change his heart, and if under the influence of such motives as he is capable of feeling, he does will a change of affection, the effect does not follow the volition. Those persons, therefore, who are continually preaching that men have every ability necessary to repent, are inculcating a doctrine at war with every man's experience, and directly opposed to the word of God, which continually represents the sinner as "dead," and impotent,

and incapable of thinking even a good thought. But we shall be told that it is a maxim of common sense, that whatever we are commanded to do we must have power or ability to perform—that it is absurd to suppose that any man is under obligations to do what he is unable to perform. Now, we are of opinion that this is precisely the point where these advocates of human ability mistake, and their error consists in the misapplication of the maxim already mentioned—which is true and self-evident when properly applied—to a case to which it does not belong. We have admitted, over and over, that this doctrine is universally true, in relation to the performance of actions consequent on volition; but we now deny that this is true when applied to our dispositions, habits, and affections. We utterly deny, that, in order to a man's being accountable and culpable for enmity to God, he should have the power of instantly changing his enmity into love. If a man has certain affections and dispositions of heart which are evil, he is accountable for them; and the more inveterate and immovable these traits of moral character are, the more he is to be blamed, and the more he deserves to be punished. But as it is alleged that the common judgment of man's moral faculty is, that he cannot be culpable unless he possesses the power to divest himself of his evil temper by an act of volition, we will state one or two cases, and leave it to every reader to judge for himself, after an impartial consideration of the facts.

In the first place, we take the case of a son, who being of a self-willed disposition, and having a great fondness for sensual pleasure and a strong desire to be free from restraint, has been led to cherish enmity to his father. The father we will suppose to be a man of conscientious integrity, who, from natural affection and from a regard to higher principles, wishes to perform his duty, by re-proving, restraining, and correcting his child. But all this discipline, instead of working a reformation, has the effect of irritating the son, who every day becomes more stubborn and incorrigible; until he comes at length to look upon his father as a tyrannical master—an object of utter aversion. Hatred readily takes root in the bosom of such a one, and by the wicked counsels of ill advisers this feeling is cherished, until by degrees it becomes so inveterate that he cannot think of his father without being conscious of malignant feelings. The effect of such feelings will be to pervert every action of the hated person, however kind or just. Malice also causes everything to be seen through a false medium. Now suppose this process to have been going on for years, the first question is, can this ungrateful son change in a moment these feelings of enmity and ill-will for filial affection? The impossibility is too manifest to require any discussion; he cannot. But is he, on account of his inability to change his affections, innocent? Surely the guilt of such a state of mind does not require that the person be at once, or at all, able to change the state of his heart. And we maintain that according to the impartial judgment of

mankind, such a man would be the object of blame without regard to any ability to change his heart. And this is the case in regard to impenitent sinners. Their enmity to God, and aversion to his law, is deep and inveterate ; and though they have neither ability nor will to change the temper of their minds, they are not the less culpable on that account ; for the nature of moral evil does not consist in that only which can be changed at will, but the deeper the malignity of the evil, the greater the sinfulness, and the more justly is the person exposed to punishment. We are of opinion, therefore, that the new doctrine of human ability, which is so much in vogue, is false and dangerous. And to corroborate this opinion, we remark, that men who are forsaken of God, and given over to believe a lie, and to work all uncleanness with greediness ; or, who have committed the unpardonable sin, so that they cannot be “renewed again to repentance,” are surely unable to change their hearts, and yet they are exceedingly guilty.

The same thing may be strongly illustrated by a reference to the devils. They are moral agents and act freely, for they continue to sin ; but who would choose to assert that they can change their nature from sin to holiness, from enmity to love ? But they possess, as fully as man, what has been called “natural ability.” They have all the physical powers requisite to constitute them moral agents, and to perform the whole will of God, and are continually adding to their guilt by their willing commission of sin. But it is impossible for the devils to become holy angels ; and this one fact is sufficient to demonstrate, that a power to change the heart is not necessary to render a man guilty for continuing in sin. The very reverse comes nearer the truth. The more unable a sinner is to cease from his enmity, the deeper is his guilt : yet on the very same principles on which it is argued, that it is as easy for man to love God as to hate him, it might be proved that it was perfectly easy for the fallen angels to love God ; or for the spirits shut up in the prison of despair to begin to love God, and thus disarm the law of that penalty which dooms them to everlasting death. If holiness is anything real ; if it has any foundation or principle in the mind in which it exists ; and if this principle was lost by the fall of men and angels, then it is certain that man cannot restore to his own soul the lost image of God. Again : they who insist upon it, that the sinner has all ability to repent and turn to God, and who so peremptorily and sternly rebuke the impenitent for not doing instantly what they have it in their power to do so easily, ought to set the example which these sinners should follow. Surely the renewed man has the same kind of ability, and as much ability, to be instantly perfect in holiness, as the unregenerate man has to renew his own soul or to change his own heart. Let the preacher give an immediate example of this ability by becoming perfectly holy, and we will consent that he preach this doctrine.

But the strongest argument against this notion of human ability,



is derived from the scriptural doctrine of the necessity of regeneration by the operations of the Holy Spirit. It is a maxim in philosophy, that no more causes should be admitted than are both true and sufficient to account for the effects. And it is equally clear, that if supernatural influence is necessary to repentance and other holy exercises, then man has not the ability to repent without such aid. It is manifestly a contradiction to assert that man is able to commence the work of holiness by his own exertions; and yet that he cannot do this without divine aid. Every text, therefore, which ascribes regeneration to God, is a proof of man's inability to regenerate himself. Indeed the very idea of a man's regenerating his own heart is absurd; it is tantamount to a man's creating himself, or begetting himself. Besides, the scriptures positively declare man's inability to turn to God without divine aid. "No man," says the Lord Jesus, "can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "Without me ye can do nothing." "Christ is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and the remission of sins." "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves;" but see Cor. iii. 5. Our sufficiency is of the Lord. Everything is ascribed to the grace of God, and man, in scripture, is continually represented as "dead in trespasses and sins," as "blind," "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

It will be objected, with much confidence, that if man has no ability to repent he cannot be blamed for not repenting. But this is only true if he desires to repent and is unable to do it. This, however, is not the case of the impenitent sinner. He does not wish to repent—if he did, there is no hindrance in his way. But his soul is at enmity with God, and this opposition is so deep and total that he has neither the will nor the power to convert himself to the love of God. But will his wickedness, therefore, excuse him, because it is so great that it has left no desire nor ability to change his mind? Certainly the judgment of mankind is sufficiently ascertained on this point, and is entirely different from this. The wretch who is so abandoned to vice, that he never feels a wish for reformation, is not on this account free from blame; so far from it, that THE GREATER THE INABILITY, THE GREATER THE GUILT. The more entirely a murderer has been under the influence of malice, the more detestable his crime. The object of all judicial investigation is to ascertain, first, the fact, and then the motive; and the more deliberate, unmixed, and invincible the malevolence appears to have been, the more unhesitating is the determination of every juror, or judge, to find him guilty. It is the common sense of all men, that the more incorrigible and irreclaimable a transgressor, the more deserving is he of severe punishment. It cannot, therefore, be a fact, that men generally think, that where there is any kind of ina-

bility there is no blame. The very reverse is true. And it will be found to be the universal conviction of men in all ages and countries, that a totally depraved character creates an inability to do good; and that the greater this inability the more criminal is the person who is the subject of it.

Another objection is, that if impenitent men are informed that they can do nothing, they will sit still and make no manner of exertion, but will wait until God's time, as it is certain all their efforts will be in vain, until God works in them to will and to do. To which we reply, that unregenerate men are ever disposed to pervert the truth of God, so as to apologise for their own negligence; but this must not hinder us from embracing it and preaching it; though this should teach us to exercise peculiar caution when there is danger of mistake or perversion. Again, it answers no good end to set such persons to strive in their own strength, and sometimes fatally misleads them; for either they become discouraged, not finding their strength to answer to the doctrine of the preacher, or they are led to think that the exertions which they make are acts of faith and repentance; and thus, without feeling their dependence on God, are induced to rely on their own strength. Now, the true system is to exhort sinners to be found in the use of God's appointed means; that is, to be diligent in attendance on the word and at the throne of grace. They should also be exhorted to repent and to perform all other commanded duties, but at the same time distinctly informed that they need the grace of God to enable them rightly to perform these acts; and their efforts should be made in humble dependence on divine assistance. While they are reading, or hearing, or meditating, or praying, God may by his Holy Spirit work faith in their hearts, and while they are using the means of repentance, the grace of repentance may be bestowed upon them. We should not exhort men to perform any duty otherwise than as God has commanded it to be done; but we may exhort an unregenerate sinner to read and pray, for in attending on these means he is making the effort to believe and to repent; and while engaged in the use of these external means, God may give a believing and penitent heart. Besides, we do not know when men cease to be unregenerate. They are often renewed before they are aware that they have experienced a saving change; and if we omit to exhort them to pray, &c., under the apprehension that they cannot perform the duty aright, we may be hindering the access of some of God's dear children to his presence. And in regard to those who pray with an unregenerate heart, we are persuaded that they do not, by making the attempt to pray, sin so egregiously as by omitting the duty altogether. If the principle on which some act in their treatment of the awakened, were carried out to its legitimate consequences, they should be told neither to plough nor sow; no, nor perform the common duties of justice and morality, because they sin in all these as certainly as in their prayers.

It is thought that inculcating the doctrine of the inability of sinners, has a tendency to lead them to procrastinate attention to their salvation, upon the plea that it is useless for them to strive until God's grace shall be granted ; and it has been admitted, that this abuse may be made of the doctrine ; but is there no danger of abuse on the other side ? When men in love with sin are taught that they possess all necessary ability to turn to God, and that they can repent at any moment by a proper use of their own powers, will they not be led to postpone attention to the concerns of the soul, under the persuasion that it is a work which they can perform at any time, even on a death-bed ? Will they not run the risk of being suddenly cut off, when they are informed that in a moment, or in a very short time, they can give their hearts to Christ ? In fact, this is precisely the practical system of every careless sinner. He knows that he is going astray at present ; but then he flatters himself that after enjoying his sinful pleasures awhile longer he will give them all up and become truly pious ; and this common delusion is carried so far, that the secret thought of many is, that if on a death-bed they should only be favoured with the exercise of reason for a short time, they can easily make their peace with God, and prepare for another world. Therefore, faithful ministers have felt it to be their duty to endeavour to dissipate this delusion, and to convince men that their hopes of future repentance are fallacious ; and they have found nothing more effectual to remove this dangerous self-confidence than to insist on the utter helplessness and total inability of the sinner to convert his own soul. But now the strain of preaching which is heard from many, coincides most perfectly with the erroneous persuasion which ignorance of their depravity leads natural men to cherish. We are persuaded, therefore, that much evil will result from this new method of preaching respecting man's ability. The evil will be twofold : first, multitudes will be confirmed in their false persuasion of their ability to become truly religious whenever they please ; and will, in this persuasion, go on presumptuously in their indulgence of sin, with the purpose to repent at some future day ; the second evil will be, that multitudes, under superficial conviction, being told that they have the power to turn to God, will, upon entirely insufficient grounds, take up the opinion that they have complied with the terms of salvation, because they are conscious they have exerted such power as they possess, and thus false hopes will be cherished which may never be removed. We are of opinion, therefore, that what is cried up as "new light," in regard to the proper method of dealing with sinners, is really a dangerous practical error ; or, if what is inculcated can, by any explanation, be reconciled with truth, yet this method of exhibiting it is calculated to mislead, and has all the pernicious effects of error.

The truth is, that no unregenerate man can change his own heart, and yet he is accountable for all its evil, and culpable for all



the inability under which he labours. Man is a moral agent, and free in his sinful actions; that is, they are voluntary. He does what he pleases, and he wills what he pleases; but when his heart is fully set in him to do evil, there is no principle from which a saving change can take place. He must be renewed by the Spirit of God. He must be created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.

## ESSAY XIII.

### THE NEW DIVINITY TRIED.\*

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IN the autumn of the year 1831 it appears that the Rev. Mr. Finney delivered a sermon on making a new heart, founded on Ezek. xviii. 13. The Rev. Mr. Rand being one of his auditors, took notes of the discourse, which he published, attended with a series of strictures, in a periodical work of which he was the editor. As these notes, in the judgment of Mr. Finney's friends, presented an imperfect view of his sermon, one of their number obtained the outline used by the preacher himself, and sent the requisite corrections to Mr. Rand, who availed himself of the aid thus afforded. The notes and strictures were afterwards published in a pamphlet form, under the title, "The New Divinity Tried." It is the review of this pamphlet by an anonymous writer, of which we propose to give a short notice.

We are not prepared to justify the course pursued by Mr. Rand, in thus bringing Mr. Finney before the public without his knowledge or consent. The considerations which evince the general impropriety of such a step are obvious, and are forcibly stated in the Review. That there may be cases in which the evil produced by a popular preacher constantly presenting erroneous views in his discourses, is so serious, that the usual etiquette of literary proceedings should be sacrificed in order to counteract its influence, we do not doubt. Nor do we question that Mr. Rand felt the present to be such a case. As the publication has not only been made, but noticed by the friends and advocates of Mr. Finney, there can be no impropriety in our calling the attention of our readers, for a few moments, to the contents of this Review. It is an elaborate production, distinguished both by acuteness and research, and pervaded by a tone of moderation. These are its favourable characteristics. On the other hand, it is lamentably deficient in open, manly discussion. Instead of a clear and bold statement of the distinguishing principles of the New Divinity, and a frank avowal of dissent from the Old Divinity of New England, there is an anx-

\* This article was published in 1832, in review of a pamphlet entitled "The New Divinity Tried; or An Examination of the Rev. Mr. Rand's Strictures on a sermon delivered by the Rev. C. J. Finney on making a new Heart."

ious, attorney-like mincing of matters; a claiming to agree with everybody, and an endeavour to cast off his opponent into the position of the solitary dissentient, and overwhelm him with the authority of great names. The evidence on which this judgment is found will appear in what follows; of its correctness the reader must judge.

We gather from the Review itself (for we have in vain endeavoured to obtain in season a copy of Mr. Rand's pamphlet), that the leading objections to the New Divinity are those which have been urged from various quarters against some of the doctrines of the *Christian Spectator*. Indeed, the reviewer, to show that Mr. Rand was not obliged to publish the notes of an extemporaneous discourse, in order to bring the opinions which it advocated before the public, tells us the doctrines of the sermon are those which have been repeatedly presented in the *Spectator*, and elsewhere. We need therefore be at no loss for the distinguishing features of the New Divinity. It starts with the assumption that morality can only be predicated of voluntary exercises; that all holiness and sin consist in acts of choice or preference. When this principle is said to be one of the radical views of the New Divinity, neither Mr. Rand nor any one else can mean to represent the opinion itself as a novelty. It is on all hands acknowledged to be centuries old. The novelty consists in its being held by men professing to be Calvinists, and in its being traced out by them to very nearly the same results as those which the uniform opponents of Calvinism have derived from it. Thus Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, presents it as the grand objection to the doctrines of original sin and original righteousness; and in defending these doctrines, President Edwards laboriously argues against this opinion. Yet it is in behalf of this radical view of the new system, that the authority of Edwards, Bellamy, Witherspoon, Dwight, Griffin, Woods, as well as Augustine and Calvin, is quoted and arrayed against Mr. Rand. Almost every one of these writers not only disclaims the opinion thus ascribed to them, but endeavours to refute it. Thus President Edwards, after stating Dr. Taylor's great objection to the doctrine of original sin to be, "that moral virtue in its very nature implieth the choice and consent of the moral agent," and quoting from him the declaration, "To say that God not only endowed Adam with a capacity of being righteous, but, moreover, that righteousness and true holiness were created with him, or wrought into his nature at the same time he was made, is to affirm a contradiction, or what is inconsistent with the very nature of righteousness," goes on to remark, "with respect to this I would observe that it consists in a notion of virtue quite inconsistent with the nature of things and the common notions of mankind." That it is thus inconsistent with the nature of things, he proceeds to prove. In the course of this proof we find such assertions as the following: "The act of choosing what is good is no further virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle, or virtuous disposition of mind. Which supposes that a



virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice, and that, therefore, it is not necessary there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition." "There is no necessity that all virtuous dispositions or affections should be the effect of choice. And so, no such supposed necessity can be a good objection against such a disposition being natural, or from a kind of instinct, implanted in the mind at its creation."\* Again, p. 409, in showing Dr. Taylor's inconsistency, he says, "If Adam must *choose* to be righteous before he was righteous," then Dr. Taylor's scheme involves a contradiction, &c. A mode of expression which clearly shows the position against which he argues. Again, "Human nature must be created with some dispositions; a disposition to relish some things as good and amiable, and to be averse to other things as odious and disagreeable \* \* \* \*. But if it had any concreated dispositions at all, they must have been right or wrong; and he then says, if man had at first a disposition to find happiness in what was good, his disposition was morally right; but "if he had a disposition to love most those things that were inferior and less worthy, then his dispositions were vicious." "This notion of Adam's being created without a principle of holiness in his heart, taken with the rest of Dr. Taylor's scheme, is inconsistent with" the history in the beginning of Genesis, p. 413. It would, however, be an endless business to quote all that might be adduced to prove that Edwards did not hold the opinion which the reviewer imputes to him. There can, it would seem, be no mistake as to his meaning. These are not mere casual expressions, which he afterwards retracts or contradicts. Neither is there any room for doubt as to the sense in which he uses the words, disposition, principle, tendency, &c. Because he carefully explains them, and characterizes the idea he means to express by every one of the marks which the reviewer and others give, in describing what they spurn and reject under the name of "principle," "holy or sinful taste." They mean something distinct from, and prior to, volitions; so does President Edwards; it is that which, in the case of Adam, to use his own word, was "concreated;" it was a disposition to love—not love itself—a relish for spiritual objects, or adaptation of mind to take pleasure in what is excellent; it was a kind of instinct, which, *as to this point* (i. e., priority as to the order of nature to acts), he says is analogous to other instincts of our nature. He even argues long to show that unless such a principle of holiness existed in man prior to all acts of choice, he never could become holy. Again, the "principle," or "disposition" which they object to, is one which is represented as not only prior to voluntary exercises, but determines their character, and is the cause of their being what they are. So precisely President Edwards, "It is a foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the faculty of the will."† This he assumes in the case of

\* Works, vol. ii., pp 407, 408.

† Treatise on the Affections, p. 232.

Adam to have existed prior to his choosing God, and determined his choice; what in the case of men since the fall he assumes as the cause of their universally sinning; and in those which are renewed, as the cause of their holy exercises. If President Edwards did not hold and teach the doctrine which the reviewer rejects and denounces, then no man ever did hold it, or ever can express it. The case is no less plain with regard to Dr. Dwight, who also gives the two characteristic marks of the kind of disposition now in question, viz., its priority to all voluntary exercises, and its being the cause of the character of those exercises. Both these ideas are expressed with a frequency, clearness, and confidence, which mark this as one of his most settled opinions. Take a single specimen: "There is a reason," he says, "why one being is holy and another sinful." This reason, or "cause of moral action, is indicated by the words *principle*, affections, nature, habits, tendency, propensity." That he does not intend by "this cause of moral action," an act, exercise, volition, is plain; first, because he says, "these terms indicate a cause, which to us is wholly unknown;" secondly, because he expressly and repeatedly asserts the contrary. "We speak of human nature as sinful, intending *not the actual commission of sin*, but a general characteristic of man, under the influence of which he has committed sins heretofore, and is prepared, and is prone to commit others. With the same meaning in our minds, we use the phrases *sinful propensities, corrupt heart, depraved mind*; and the contrary ones, holy or virtuous dispositions, moral rectitude of character, and many others of like import. When we use these kinds of phraseology, we intend that a reason exists, although undefinable and unintelligible by ourselves, why one mind will either usually or uniformly be the subject of holy volitions, and another of sinful ones. We do not intend to assert that any one, or any number of the volitions of the man whom we characterize, has been, or will be, holy or sinful, *nor do we mean to refer to actual volitions at all*. Instead of this, we mean to indicate a state of mind generally existing, out of which holy volitions may in one case be fairly expected to arise, and sinful ones in another.\* Again, "When God created Adam, there was a period of his existence after he began to be, antecedent to that in which he exercised the first volition. Every man, who believes the mind to be something besides ideas and exercises, and who does not admit the doctrine of casualty, will acknowledge that in this period *the mind of Adam was in such a state*; that it was propense to the exercise of virtuous volitions, rather than sinful ones. This state of mind has been commonly styled *disposition, temper, inclination, heart, &c.* In the scriptures it usually bears the last of these names. I shall take the liberty to call it disposition. This disposition was the *cause* whence his virtuous volitions proceeded: the reason why they were virtuous and not sinful. Of the metaphysical nature of this cause, I

\* Works, vol. i., pp. 410, 411.

am ignorant." "This cause of necessity preceded these volitions, and therefore certainly existed in that state of mind which was previous to his first volition."\* This idea enters essentially into his views of several important doctrines. Thus he says Adam was created holy; i. e., with holy or virtuous dispositions, propense to the exercises of holy volitions. See his Sermon on Man, and that on Regeneration. Again, he makes original sin, or depravity derived from Adam, to consist in this sinful disposition—a contaminated moral nature—and argues that infants are depraved before they are "capable of moral action." And again, he represents regeneration to consist in "a relish for spiritual objects, communicated to it by the power of the Holy Ghost," and explains his meaning by a reference to "the state of mind of Adam, in the period antecedent to that in which he exercised his first volition." "The soul of Adam was created with a relish for spiritual objects. The soul of every man who becomes a Christian, is renewed by the communication of the same relish. In Adam this disposition produced virtuous volitions. In every child of Adam, who becomes the subject of virtue, it produces the same effects."† It is impossible, we should think, for any man to force himself to believe that Dr. Dwight held the doctrine that "moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone." To reconcile all the declarations which we have quoted, and a multitude of others with which his works abound, is an impossibility; unless, indeed, we admit that he did not really believe what he over and over declares to have been his faith, and really adopted an opinion against which he earnestly protests and ably argues, or that he was so little master of the English language as to be unable to communicate ideas at all. The reviewer may possibly say, that he does not deny that Dr. Dwight and others held to the existence of a metaphysical something, as the cause of moral actions; but they did not attribute to this something itself a moral character; that it was called holy or sinful, not from its nature, but only from its effects. To this, however, the reply is obvious; Dr. Dwight not only speaks of this disposition as virtuous or vicious, calls it a sinful or holy propensity, principle, nature, habit, heart; terms which, in themselves, one would suppose necessarily imply that the thing to which they apply had a moral character: but he in so many words declares it to be "the seat of moral character in rational beings;" it is that which mainly constitutes the moral character; it is what we mean, he says, when we use the phrases, *corrupt heart*, *depraved mind*; or the contrary ones, holy disposition, moral rectitude, holiness of character. He tells us he intends by these phrases "a state of mind," which is not a voluntary exercise, but the cause of volitions. "This cause is what is so often mentioned in scripture under the name of *the heart*; as when it is said, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'" Will the reviewer have us

\* Works, vol. ii., p. 419.

† Vol. ii., p. 214.



believe Dr. Dwight taught there was no moral character in this cause of voluntary exercises, which he supposed the Bible meant, when it speaks of a desperately wicked heart? Besides, he tells us the communication of a holy disposition, or relish for spiritual objects, constitutes regeneration—is not the moral character changed in regeneration? Has that no moral character, the reception of which constitutes a man a new creature in Christ Jesus? Yet this, Dr. Dwight says, is not a volition (p. 418, vol. ii.), but “a relish for spiritual objects,” “a disposition which produces virtuous volitions.” Again: the very same objections which the reviewer and other advocates of the New Divinity, urge against the idea of moral principles prior to voluntary exercises, and determining their character, Dr. Dwight considers and refutes. And finally, the reviewer tells that he and his friends agree on this point with the advocates of “the exercise scheme,” the very persons from whom Dr. Dwight most earnestly dissents as to this very point, which, he says, no one but a friend of that scheme, or of the liberty of indifference, would think of maintaining. Very much to the same purpose, President Edwards says, that this opinion concerning virtue (as entirely depending on choice and agency) arises from the absurd notions in vogue concerning the freedom of the will, as if it consisted in the will’s self-determining power.”\*

If anything could be more wonderful than the reviewer’s claiming the authority of Edwards and Dwight, in favour of the opinion under consideration, it would be his claiming Dr. Griffin in the same behalf; a theologian who is almost an ultra on the other side. Our limits and time utterly forbid our exhibiting the evidence in every case of the lamentable misrepresentations by the reviewer of the opinions of the authors to whom he refers. In the case of Dr. Griffin, it is the less necessary, as his Park Street Lectures are so extensively known, and as he has so recently proclaimed his dissent from the New Divinity in his sermon on Regeneration. We refer the readers to these works. In the former, they will find him speaking of sin as an “attribute of our nature,” derived from our original parents, “propagated like reason or speech (neither of which are exercised at first), propagated like many other propensities, mental as well as bodily—propagated like the noxious nature of other animals.”—P. 12.

As to poor Augustine and Calvin being represented as holding the radical doctrine of Pelagius, we must think it a great oversight in the reviewer. It destroys the whole verisimilitude of his story. It forces the reader to suspect the writer of irony, or to set down his statements with regard to less notorious authors, for nothing. Calvin defines original sin “an hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, diffused through every part of the soul [strange definition of a voluntary exercise], which first makes us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and then produces those works which the

\* Works, vol. ii., p. 410.

scriptures denominate the works of the flesh." Do not the "works of the flesh" include all sinful exercises? and is there not here asserted a cause of those exercises, which has itself a moral character? Infants, he says, at their birth, are liable to condemnation, "for though they have not at that time produced the fruits of their unrighteousness, yet they have the seed inclosed in them; nay, their whole nature is a mere seed of sin, so that it cannot but be odious and abominable to God."—*Institutiones*, lib. ii., cap. 1, 8. And in another place he speaks of men being sinners, "*non pravae duntaxat consuetudinis vitio sed naturae quoque pravitate.*" Is this the language of Mr. Finney? Could any advocate of the New Divinity say with Calvin, that the "whole nature" of man, prior to the production of the works of the flesh, "is odious and abominable to God?" If not, why quote Calvin as agreeing with them as to this very point, that all sin consists in voluntary exercises? The reviewer himself represents Calvin as teaching that original sin consists in "inherent corruption," a mode of expression constantly employed by such writers, to indicate moral depravity as distinct from actual sins, and prior to them.

With regard to Augustine the case is still more extraordinary. The reviewer quotes from De Moor the following passage from this father: "Sin is so far a voluntary evil, that it would not be sin if it were not voluntary," in proof that he also held, "that a moral character was to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone." And yet De Moor immediately adds, in answer to the appeal which he says Pelagians make to this passage, that Augustine did not wish the declaration to be understood of original sin, but restricts it to actual sin, and quotes in proof from his work against Julian, an explicit statement that the principle was to be so restricted. "*Hoc enim,*" says Augustine, "*recte dicitur propter proprium cujusque peccatum, non propter primi peccati originale contagium.*" "This is properly said in reference to the proper (or actual) sin of each one, but not of the original contagion of the first sin." With this declaration before his eyes, how could the reviewer make such a representation?

It is this reference to such men as Edwards, Bellamy, and Dwight, besides older writers, as holding opinions which they not only did not hold, but which in every form, expressly and by implication, they rejected and condemn, that we consider unfair and uncandid. We are painfully anxious to have this course on the part of the reviewer and others explained. We wish to know on what principle such statements can be reconciled with honesty. We take it for granted they must have some esoteric sense, some private meaning, some *arrière pensée*, by which to clear their consciences in this matter; but what it is we cannot divine. This has become so common and so serious an evil, that we are not surprised to find some of the leading theologians of Connecticut saying, "It is surely time that the enemies of truth were relieved of the burden of making doctrines for us, or of informing us what we

ourselves believe.”\* It is just as easy to make Mr. Rand agree with Mr. Finney, as it is President Edwards or Dr. Dwight. All that is necessary is to take some declaration which is intended to apply to one subject and apply it to another; and adopt the principle that language is to be interpreted, not according to the writer's views of the nature of the subject, but according to those of the reviewer. If he say with Dr. Griffin, “men are voluntary and free in all their wickedness;” or ask with Dr. Witherspoon, “Does any man *commit* sin but from his own choice? or is he hindered from any duty to which he is sincerely and heartily inclined?” then he holds “that a moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone.” These identical passages, referring as the very language implies to actual sins, are quoted by the reviewer in his defence of that position, and as implying that a moral character can be ascribed to nothing anterior to such voluntary exercises. It matters not, it would seem, that these declarations are perfectly consistent with the belief in moral principles, dispositions, or tastes, as existing prior to all acts, or that their authors express such to be their belief. This is gross misrepresentation of a writer's real opinions, whatever be its motive, or on whatever principle its justification may be attempted.

We have already admitted that there was no novelty in this fundamental principle of the New Divinity, but that the novelty consisted in its being adopted by nominal Calvinists, and traced to much the same results as it ever has been by the open opposers of Calvinism. Thus Mr. Finney says, with great plainness, “a nature cannot be holy. The nature of Adam at his creation was not holy. Adam was made with a nature neither sinful nor holy. When he began to act he made it his governing purpose to serve God.” This declaration is, at least, in apparent opposition to the statements so constantly occurring in theological writers—that the nature of Adam was holy at his creation—that the *nature* of man since the fall is sinful, and others of similar import. The method which the reviewer adopts of reconciling this apparent discrepancy is, as usual, entirely unsatisfactory. He tells us there are three senses in which the word nature is used, as applied to moral beings; first, it indicates something which is an original and essential part of their constitution, not resulting at all from their choice or agency, and necessarily found in them of whatever character and in whatever circumstances; second, it is used to designate the period prior to conversion, as when Paul says, “we are by nature,” i. e., in our unregenerate state, “the children of wrath;” and “a third sense is, an expression of the *fact* that there is something in the being a thing spoken of, which is the ground or occasion of a certainty that it will, in all its appropriate circumstances,

\* See the prospectus of a new monthly religious periodical, to be entitled the Evangelical Magazine, and to be conducted by the Executive Committee of the Connecticut Doctrinal Tract Society.



exhibit the result or quality predicated of it." What the preacher meant and only meant, according to the reviewer, was "that holiness was not an essential part of Adam's constitution at his creation, so as not to result at all from his choice and agency."—Pp. 9, 10. There is in all this statement a great want of precision and accuracy. The reviewer uses the expressions, *essential* part of the constitution, and "not resulting from choice or agency," as synonymous, though he must be aware that Mr. Rand and the great body of Christians agree in saying, that holiness and sin are not and cannot be essential attributes, in the sense of the reviewer. An essential attribute is an attribute which inheres in the essence of a thing, and is necessary to its being. Thus the attributes of thought and feeling are essential to mind; without them it is not mind. Who ever maintained that holiness was so essential a part of man's constitution that he ceased to be man when he lost it? Who ever maintained that either sin or holiness resided in the essence of the soul, or was a physical attribute? The reviewer knows as well as anybody, that this Manichean and Flacian doctrine was spurned and rejected by the whole Christian church. But does it follow from this, that holiness and sin must depend entirely on choice and agency; that there can be nothing of a moral character prior to acts of preference? Certainly not. For this simple reason, that while the Christian church has rejected the idea of the substantial nature of sin and holiness, it has with equal unanimity held the doctrine of moral propensities, dispositions, or tendencies, prior to all acts of choice. It is in this sense that they have affirmed, and it is in this sense the New Divinity denies, that "a nature may be sinful or holy." And this denial, as Mr. Rand correctly states, is a denial of the doctrines of original righteousness and original sin. "The doctrine of *original righteousness*, or the creation of our first parents with holy principles and dispositions, has a close connexion," says President Edwards, "with the doctrine of original sin. Dr. Taylor was sensible of this; and accordingly he strenuously opposes this doctrine in his book on original sin." "Dr. T.'s grand objection against this doctrine, which he abundantly insists on, is this: that it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of virtue that it should be created with any person; because, if so, it must be by an act of God's absolute power without our knowledge or concurrence; and that moral virtue, in its very nature, implieth the choice and consent of the moral agent." This is the notion of virtue which he pronounces quite inconsistent with the nature of things. Human nature, he afterwards says, must be created with some dispositions; these concentrated dispositions must be right or wrong; if man had a disposition to delight in what was good, then his dispositions were morally right.—Vol. ii., pp. 406 and 413. This is the view which has been wellnigh universal in the Christian church; this is the idea of original righteousness which the New Divinity rejects, urging the same objection to it which Dr. Taylor of Norwich, and

Pelagians and Socinians long before him had done. We are not, any more than the reviewer, discussing the truth of these doctrines, but merely endeavouring to correct his very uncandid representations, as they appear to us.

It is further objected to the New Divinity, that it rejects the doctrine of original sin. This the reviewer denies. What is this doctrine? If this point be ascertained, the question whether the objection is well founded or not can be easily answered. Let us advert then to the definitions of the doctrine as given in the leading Protestant Confessions. In the Helvetic Confession, the *Confessio et Expositio brevis*, &c., cap. viii., after stating that man was at first created in the image of God, but by the fall became subject to sin, death, and various calamities, and that all who are descended from Adam are like him and exposed to all these evils, it is said, "Sin we understand to be that native corruption of man, derived or propagated from our first parents to us, by which we are immersed in evil desires, averse from good, prone to all evil," &c. "We therefore acknowledge *original sin* to be in all men; we acknowledge all other sins which arise from this," &c. The Basil Confession of 1532: "We confess that man was originally created in the image of God," &c., "but of his own accord fell into sin, by which fall the whole human race has become corrupt and liable to condemnation. Hence our nature is vitiated," &c. The Gallican confession, 1561: "We believe that the whole race of Adam is infected with this contagion which we call original sin, that is, a depravity which is propagated, and is not derived by imitation merely, as the Pelagians supposed, all whose errors we detest. Neither do we think it necessary to inquire how this sin can be propagated from one to another," &c. The ninth Article of the Church of England states: "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the fault and corruption of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit." The Belgic Confession says, "We believe, that by the disobedience of Adam, original sin has been diffused through the whole human race, which is a corruption of the whole nature and a hereditary depravity, by which even infants in their mother's womb are polluted, and which, as a root, produces every kind of sin in man, and is so foul and execrable before God, that it suffices to the condemnation of the human race." The Polish Confession, Art. iii.: "All men, Christ only excepted, are conceived and born in sin, even the most holy Virgin Mary. Original sin consists not only in the entire want of original righteousness, but also in depravity or proneness to evil, propagated from Adam to all men." The Augsburg Confession, Art. ii.: "This disease or original depravity is truly sin, condemning and bringing even now eternal death to those who are not renewed by baptism and the Holy Spirit." And the Forma Con-

cordantiae: "Not only actual transgressions should be acknowledged as sins, but especially this hereditary disease should be regarded as a horrible sin, and indeed as the principle and head of all sins, whence, as from a root, all other transgressions grow."

We have referred to the leading confessions of the period of the Reformation to show that they all represent as the constituent essential idea of original sin—a corrupted nature, or hereditary taint derived from Adam, propagated by ordinary generation, infecting the whole race, and the source or root of all actual sin. This is not the doctrine therefore of Calvinists merely, but of the reformed churches generally, as it was of the catholic church before the Reformation. It is the doctrine, too, of the great body of Arminians. It is unnecessary to refer to individual writers after this reference to symbols which express the united testimony of thousands as to what original sin is. That the more modern Calvinists (with the exception of the advocates of the exercise scheme) unite in this view is as plain, and as generally acknowledged, as that it was held by the Reformers. Thus President Edwards defines original sin to be "an innate sinful depravity of heart." He makes this depravity to consist "in a corrupt and evil disposition," prior to all sinful exercises. He infers from the universality and certainty of the sinful conduct of men, first, "that the natural state of the mind of man is attended with a propensity of nature to such an issue;" and secondly, that their "nature is corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity." He speaks of this propensity "as a very evil, pernicious, and depraved propensity;" "an infinitely dreadful and pernicious tendency." He undertakes to prove "that wickedness belongs to the very nature of men." He devotes a chapter to the consideration of the objection, "that to suppose men born in sin without their choice, or any previous act of their own, is to suppose what is inconsistent with the nature of sin;" and another to the objection, that "the doctrine of native corruption" makes God the author of sin. Precisely the objections of the New Divinity to the common views on this subject.

Dr. Dwight is not less explicit; he makes this depravity to consist in "the corruption of that energy of the mind whence volitions flow, and which is the seat of moral character in rational beings." Vol. i., p. 488. He proves that "infants are contaminated in their moral nature," from the sinful conduct of "every infant who lives long enough to be capable of moral action." Here then is moral pollution prior to moral action.

Dr. Woods also maintains the doctrine of depravity as natural, innate, and hereditary, in his letters to Dr. Ware. "Sin," according to Dr. Griffin, "belongs to the nature of man, as much as reason or speech [which we do not believe; but it serves to show to what lengths the reviewer has permitted himself to go, when he quotes this writer in support of the position, that all sin consists in voluntary exercises], though in a sense altogether compatible with blame, and must be derived, like other universal attributes,



from the original parent ; propagated like reason or speech (neither of which is exercised at first) ; propagated like many other propensities, mental as well as bodily, which certainly are inherited from parents ; propagated like the noxious nature of animals." He afterwards argues, "if infants receive their whole nature from their parents pure," "if they are infected with no depravity," when born, "it is plain that they never derived a taint of moral pollution from Adam." "There can be no conveyance after they are born, and his sin was in no sense the occasion of the universal depravity of the world, otherwise than merely as the first example."\*

We think it must be apparent that Mr. Rand was perfectly justifiable in asserting that the New Divinity rejects the doctrine of original sin. What is the meaning of this assertion ? Is it not that the idea commonly expressed by that term is discarded ? This idea, as we have shown, is that of natural hereditary depravity, or of a corrupt moral nature derived from our first parent. Sometimes indeed more is included in the term, as the idea of imputation. Sometimes the phrase is explained with more and sometimes with less precision, some resolving the idea of corruption into its constituent parts—the want of original righteousness and tendency to evil—and others not ; but with an uniformity almost unparalleled in theological language and opinion, has the idea of innate corruption been represented as the essential constituent idea of original sin. The very distinction between original and actual sin, so common, shows that the former expression is intended to convey the idea of something which is regarded as sin, which is not an act or voluntary exercise. The obvious sense, therefore, of Mr. Rand's assertion is correct.

The reviewer's answer is a little remarkable. He tells us there are various senses in which the phrase "original sin" has been used in orthodox confessions and standard writings, in some one of which senses Mr. Finney may, and doubtless does, hold to "original sin."—P. 13. He then undertakes to enumerate eight different senses, mainly by representing as distinct, different modes of stating the same idea. 1. The first sin of the first man. 2. The first sin of the first man and woman. (Is it not clear the reviewer was anxious to swell his list?) 3. Natural or inherent corruption. 4. Want of original righteousness and inclination to evil. (Identical with the preceding.) 5. Imputation of Adam's sin, and the innate sinful depravity of the heart. 6. Something not described, but distinct from natural corruption, and that came to us by the fall of Adam. (This specification is founded on the answer given in the form of examination before the communion in the Kirk of Scotland, 1591, to the question, "What things come to us by that fall ? Ans. Original sin, and natural corruption. Where it is plain that by original sin is meant, the guilt of Adam's first sin.) 7. The guilt of Adam's first sin, the defect of original right-

\* Park Street Lectures, pp. 12—18.

eousness, and concupiscence. 8. The universal sinfulness of Adam's posterity as connected with his first sin by divine constitution.—*Dr. Hopkins.*

No one, we presume, could imagine that Mr. Rand intended to charge Mr. Finney with denying the fact that Adam sinned, when he said he denied the doctrine of original sin. The first and second, therefore, of the foregoing specifications, might safely have been omitted. As to all the others, excepting the last, they amount to the simple statement of President Edwards, that the phrase is commonly used to indicate either the guilt of Adam's first sin, or inherent corruption, sometimes the one and sometimes the other, but most frequently both conjoined. The cases in which original sin is said to include both the want of original righteousness and corruption of nature, are, as we before remarked, but examples of greater precision in the description of the thing intended, and not statements of an opinion diverse from that expressed by the single phrase, innate depravity. The absence of light is darkness, the absence of heat is cold, the absence of order is confusion, and so the absence of original righteousness is depravity; and this is all that President Edwards intended to express in the passage quoted by the reviewer, in which he says there is no necessity, in order to account for a sinful corruption of nature, yea, a total native depravity of the heart of man, to suppose any evil quality infused, but that the absence of positive good qualities is abundantly sufficient. The reviewer, we presume, knows very well that this is the common view adopted by those who hold the doctrine of *physical* depravity, as it is styled by the New Divinity. He knew that, according to their views, it is just as supposable that man might be created with an "instinctive" disposition to love God, as with the disposition to love himself, love society, his children, or anything else; that Adam was actually thus created, that this disposition was not constitutional in the sense in which the instinct of self-love is constitutional, but supernatural, resulting from his being in communion with the Spirit of God; that the human soul, instinct with the dispositions of self-love, natural appetite, &c., and destitute of any disposition to take delight in God or holiness, is not in its normal state, but in a state of moral degradation and ruin; that they believe there is a great difference between the state of the soul when it comes into existence since the fall, and the state of Adam's soul; between the soul of an ordinary man and the state of the soul of the blessed Jesus; that this difference is prior to all choice or agency, and not dependent upon them, and it is a moral difference, Adam being in a holy state, instinct with holy dispositions, and men being in a state of moral corruption at the moment of their coming into existence. He doubtless knew also, as his own enumeration shows, that the phrase, original sin, has been with great unanimity employed to designate this state of the soul prior to moral action, and that the fact that all men actually sin, and that their sinfulness is *somehow* connected with the sin of

Adam, is not the fact which the term has been employed (to any extent) to express ; that, on the contrary, the one fact (the universally sinful conduct of men) has been the standing argument to prove the other fact, viz., innate inherent depravity ; and he should, therefore, have seen that it is preposterous to assert that the fact of all men actually sinning, and that this is *somehow* connected with Adam's sin, is the fact expressed by the term original sin. If this be so, then all Pelagians, and all Socinians, and all opposers of the doctrine of original sin, still hold it. For they all believe that men universally sin, and that this is *somehow* (by example, &c.) connected with Adam's sin. The reviewer's saying, "that men sin, and *only* sin, until renewed by the Holy Ghost," although it may make a difference as to the extent of the wickedness of men, makes none in the world as to the doctrine of original sin. This doctrine, as it has been held by ninety-hundredths of the Christian church, he rejects just as much as the Pelagians do.\* We presume this will be called an *ad invidiam* argument. It little concerns us what it is called, if it is but just and proper in itself. What is the state of the case ? Here are a set of men who hold certain opinions, which they assiduously and ably advocate. Not content with allowing them to stand on their own merits, they seek to cover them with the robes of authority, asserting that this, and that, and almost every man distinguished for piety and talents, has held or does hold them. When currency and favour are thus sought to be obtained for these opinions, by claiming in their behalf the authority of venerable names, is it not a duty to say and show that this claim is unfounded, if such be really the case ? What means this arraying against Mr. Rand the authority of Augustine, Calvin, Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, &c., &c. ? What is the object of this array, if it is not to crush him, and sustain Mr. Finney ? And yet we presume there is no fact in the history of theological opinions more notorious, than that as to the points in debate they agree with Mr. Rand, and differ from Mr. Finney. The earliest advocate of some of the leading doctrines of the New Divinity, the author of *Views in Theology*, instead of pursuing this objectionable and unworthy course, came out with a distinct avowal of dissent from the generally received doctrines on this subject. The same honourable course was taken by Dr. Cox ; by the late Mr. Christmas, in his sermon on *Ability* ; by Mr. Duffield, in his recent work on *Regeneration* ; and we venture to commend it to the reviewer as the right course, and, if such a consideration need be suggested, as the most politic. We have little doubt some of the advocates of the New Divinity have suffered more in public confidence from taking the opposite course,

\* The appeal which the reviewer makes to writings of the disciples of Dr. Emmons, is, as he must know, entirely unsatisfactory. Though as to the verbal statement, that sin consists in voluntary acts, there is an agreement, the whole view and relations of the doctrine as held by him and them are different, and some of the most zealous opponents of the New Divinity are these very Emmonites, to whom he is constantly appealing for protection.



than from their opinions themselves. And we suspect the reviewer's pamphlet will be another mill-stone around their neck.

Another inference from the leading idea of this new system is, that regeneration is man's own act, consisting in the choice of God as the portion of the soul, or in a change in the governing purpose of the life. Mr. Finney's account of its nature is as follows: "I will show," says he, "what is intended in the command in the text (to make a new heart). It is that a man should *change the governing purpose of his life*. A man resolves to be a lawyer; then he directs all his plans and efforts to that object, and that for the time is his governing purpose. Afterwards, he may alter his determination and resolve to be a merchant. Now he directs all his efforts to *that* object, and so has changed his heart, or governing purpose." Again: "It is apparent that the change now described, effected by the simple volition of the sinner's mind through the influence of motives, is a sufficient change, all that the Bible requires. It is all that is necessary to make a sinner a Christian."

This account of making a new heart, the reviewer undertakes to persuade the public, is the orthodox doctrine of regeneration and conversion. This he attempts by plunging at once into the depths of metaphysics, and bringing out of these plain sentences a meaning as remote from their apparent sense, as ever Cabalist extracted from Hebrew letters. He begins by exhibiting the various senses in which the words, *will, heart, purpose, volition, &c.*, are used. We question the accuracy of his statements with regard to the first of these terms. He is right enough in distinguishing between the restricted and extended meaning of the word, that is, between the will considered as the power of the mind to determine on its own actions, and as the power to choose or prefer. But when he infers from this latter definition, that not only the natural appetites, as hunger and thirst, but also the social affections, as love of parents and children, &c., are excluded by Edwards and others who adopt it, from the will, we demur. Edwards says that "all liking and disliking, inclining or being averse to, being pleased or displeased with," are to be referred to the will, and consequently it includes these affections. However, it is not to our purpose to pursue this subject. The reviewer claims, as usual, to agree with Edwards, and excludes all such affections as love of parents, love of children, &c., from the will, until they involve a preference or choice; as though every exercise of these affections did not in their own nature involve such a preference, as much as love, when directed to any object. He then makes the will and heart synonymous (thus excluding love of children, &c., from the heart), and proceeds to enumerate the various classification of volitions into *principal, ultimative, subordinate, imminent, and imperative*, and winds up his elucidation and defence of Mr. Finney's statement, by making his "governing purpose" to be equivalent with an "*immanent volition*," or "the controlling habitual pre-

ference of the soul." We cannot understand by what rule of interpretation this sense can be got out of the preacher's expressions in their connexion in the sermon. Certain it is the common usage of language would never lead any reader to imagine that, in a plain popular discourse, not in a metaphysical essay from an avowed advocate of the exercise scheme, the phrase, a "governing purpose," meant an immanent volition; or "to alter a determination," meant to change the supreme controlling affection or choice of the soul. The reviewer himself betrays his conviction that this is not the proper acceptation of the terms, for he complains of Mr. Rand for making Mr. Finney's governing purpose mean no more than a mere determination of the mind; and yet the preacher substitutes one of these expressions for the other, as, in his own view, synonymous. He tells us "a man alters his determination, and so has changed his heart or governing purpose." But supposing we should admit that, taken by themselves, the words "governing purpose" might bear the sense the reviewer endeavours to place under them, how is this to be reconciled with the preacher's illustrations? "A man resolves to be a lawyer; then he directs all his plans and efforts to that object, and that for the time is his governing purpose: afterwards he may alter his determination, and resolve to be a merchant; now he directs all his efforts to *that* object, and so has changed his heart or governing purpose." What is the nature of the change involved in the alteration of a man's purpose, with regard to his profession? Is it a radical change of the affections, or is it a mere determination of the mind, founded on considerations of whose nature the determination itself can give us no certain information? As one man may make the change from one motive, and another from another; one from real love to the pursuit chosen, and another from extraneous reasons; it is evident the change of purpose does not imply nor necessarily involve a change in the affections. When, therefore, Mr. Finney tells his hearers that the change required of them is a change analogous to that which takes place when a man alters his determination as to his profession, and that this is all that is required, all that is necessary to make a sinner a Christian, he is justly represented as making religion to consist in a mere determination of the mind. Whatever may be his esoteric sense, this is the meaning his words convey, and his hearers, we have no doubt, in nine cases out of ten receive. This impression would be further confirmed by their being told that it is a very simple change, effected by a simple volition of their own minds; and that it is a very easy change, it being as easy to purpose right as wrong. The reviewer's defence of this mode of representing a change, which is said in scripture to be effected by the mighty power of God, strikes us as singularly weak. He tells us, "there are two different senses in which a moral act may be said to be easy or difficult to a man; the one referring to the nature of the act and the capacity of the agent, that is, his possession of the requisite powers for its per-

formance ; and the other referring to the disposition and habit of his mind in reference to the act."—P. 11. Thus we may say, it is as easy to be generous as covetous, and that it is very difficult for a covetous man to be generous. It is admitted then, that it is very difficult for a man to do anything contrary to the disposition or habit of his mind, and of course it must be exceedingly difficult to make an entire and radical change in the affections. But Mr. Finney says it is very easy to change the heart—to alter one's purpose. Would not this prove that he supposed the thing to be done was not the thing which the reviewer represents to be very difficult? Does it not go to confirm the impression that he makes the change in question to consist in a mere determination of the mind, to the exclusion of a change in the affections? When the ease of the work to be done is urged as a motive for doing it, we have a right to suppose that an easy work is intended. But the transferring the affections from one object to another of an opposite character ; to love what we have been accustomed to hate, and to hate what we have been in the habit of loving, is a difficult work, and therefore not included in the mere alteration of one's purpose, which is declared to be, and in fact is, so easy. Not only, therefore, the mode of expression employed in describing a change of heart, but the illustrations of its nature, and the mode of enforcing the duty, are adapted to make precisely the impression which Mr. Rand received from the sermon, that conversion, in the judgment of the preacher, is a very trifling affair, effected as easily as a change in our plans of business ; and we have reason to know that this is the impression actually produced on the minds of hearers by the preachers of this class, and on the minds of the friends and advocates of the new system themselves. Such, we think, is the natural and fair impression of the popular mode of representing the subject ; and we very much question whether the metaphysical explanation of it amounts to anything more. It is one of the most singular features of the review under consideration, that although the writer seems willing to take shelter under any great name, his principal reliance is on the advocates of Emmonism. Yet it so happens that his system and theirs are exactly the poles apart. In the one, divine agency is exalted to the real exclusion of that of man ; in the other, very much the reverse is the case. According to the one, it is agreeable to the nature of sin and virtue to be created ; according to the other, necessary holiness is no holiness, there cannot be even an "instinct" for holiness, to borrow President Edwards's expression. The same expression, therefore, in the mouth of the advocate of the one theory, may have a very different meaning from what it has in that of an advocate of the other ; and even if the idea be the same, its whole relations and bearings are different. It is not, then, to the followers of Dr. Emmons we are to go to learn what is meant by the immanent volitions, primary choices, or governing purposes of the New Divinity. We must go, where the reviewer himself in another part of his



pamphlet sends us, to the advocates of the new system itself. We find that when they come to give their philosophical explanation of the nature of regeneration, it amounts to little more than the popular representations of Mr. Finney. In the *Christian Spectator*, for example, we find regeneration described as the choice of God, as the chief good, under the impulse of self-love or desire of happiness. The sinner is, therefore, directed to consider which is adapted to make him most happy, God or the world ; to place the case fairly before his mind, and, by a great effort, choose right. This, as we understand it, is a description, not of an entire and radical change in the affections, but of a simple determination of the mind, founded on the single consideration of the adaptation of the object chosen to impart happiness. If I determine to seek one thing because it will make me more happy than another (and if any other consideration be admitted, as determining the choice, the whole theory is gone), this is a mere decision of the mind ; it neither implies nor expresses any radical change of the affections. On the contrary, the description seems utterly inappropriate to such a change. Does any man love by a violent effort ? Does he ever, by summoning his powers for the emergency, by a volition and in a moment, transfer his heart from one object to another ? Was it ever known, that a man deeply in love with one person, by a desperate effort and at a stroke destroyed that affection and originated another ? He may be fully convinced his passion is hopeless, that it will render him miserable, but he would stare at the metaphysician who should tell him it was as easy to love one person as another, all he had to do was to energize a new volition and choose another object, loving it in a moment with all the ardour of his first attachment. As this description of an immanent volition does not suit the process of a change in the affections in common life ; as no man, by a simple act of the will, and by a strenuous effort, transfers his heart from one object to another ; so neither does it suit the experience of the Christian. We have no idea that the account given in the *Spectator* of the process of regeneration, was drawn from the history of the writer's own exercises, nor do we believe there is a Christian in the world who can recognize in it a delineation of his experience. So far as we have ever known or heard, the reverse of this is the case. Instead of loving by a desperate effort, or by a simple volition effecting this radical change in the affections, the Christian is constrained to acknowledge he knows not how the change occurred. "Whereas I was blind, now I see," is the amount of his knowledge. He perceives the character of God to be infinitely lovely, sin to be loathsome, the Saviour to be all he needs ; but why he never saw all this before, or why it all appears so clear and cheering to him now, he cannot tell.

We cannot but think that the impression made by the mode of representation adopted by the New Divinity of this important subject, is eminently injurious and derogatory to true religion ; that

the depravity of the heart is practically represented as a very slight matter; that the change, and the whole change, necessary to constitute a man a Christian is represented as a mere determination of his own mind, analogous to a change of purpose as to his profession; that a sense of his dependence on the Spirit of God is almost entirely destroyed, and of course the Spirit himself dishonoured. This latter evil results not merely from the manner in which the nature of the change of heart is described, and the ability of the sinner to effect it is represented, nor from the fact that this dependence is kept out of view; but also from the ideas of the nature of agency and freedom of the will, which, as we have before had occasion to remark, appear to lie at the foundation of the whole system, as it has been presented in the *Christian Spectator*, and from the manner in which the Spirit's influence is described by many of the most prominent advocates of the theory. These views of human agency are such, that God is virtually represented as unable to control the moral exercises of his creatures; that notwithstanding all that he can do, they may yet act counter to his wishes, and sin on in despite of all the influence which he can exert over them consistently with their free agency. If this be not to emancipate the whole intelligent universe from the control of God, and destroy all the foundations of our hopes in his promises, we know not what it is. When sinners are thus represented as depending on themselves, God having done all he can, exhausted all his power in vain for their conversion, how they can be made to feel that they are in his hands, depending on his sovereign grace, we cannot conceive. What the nature of the sinner's dependence on the Spirit of God according to Mr. Finney is, we may learn from the following illustration. "To illustrate the different senses in which making a new heart," says the reviewer, "may be ascribed to God, to the preacher, to the truth or word of God, and to the sinner himself, Mr. F. supposed the case of a man arrested when about to step over a precipice by a person crying to him, *stop*; and said, This illustrates the use of the four kinds of expression in the Bible in reference to the conversion of a sinner, with one exception. In the case supposed, there was only the voice of the man who gave the alarm, but in conversion, there is both the voice of the preacher and the voice of the Spirit; the preacher cries *stop*, and the Spirit cries *stop* too."—P. 28. On this subject, however, the advocates of the system profess not to be united. Mr. Finney and others maintain that there is no mystery about the mode of the Spirit's operation; the reviewer is inclined to think there is: the one says, "there is no direct and immediate act;" the other, if he must adopt a theory, is disposed to admit that there is an immediate influence on the mind. The reviewer lays little stress on the difference, as both views, he says, have not only been held by many Calvinistic divines, but in connexion with a firm belief of the absolute necessity and universal fact of the special agency of the Holy Spirit in producing conversion. We are

aware of the diversity of representation as to this special point among orthodox writers, but we are fully persuaded that whatever may be the private opinions of those who preach as Mr. Finney is represented to have done in this sermon, the impression made on their audience of the necessity of divine influence, of the sinner's dependence, is immeasurably below the standard of the divines to whom the reviewer appeals in their justification. For an audience to be told that all the Spirit does for them is to tell them to *stop*; that, antecedently even to this influence, they *may* and *can* do all that God requires; and, what is part of the system of the Spectator, that subsequently or during the utmost exertion of this influence, they *may* and *can* resist and remain unconverted; is surely a representation from which those divines would have revolted, and which has a necessary tendency to subvert what the reviewer calls the fundamental doctrine of the absolute necessity of the special agency of the Holy Ghost in producing conversion.

We believe that the characteristic tendency of this mode of preaching is to keep the Holy Spirit and his influences out of view; and we fear a still more serious objection is, that Christ and his cross are practically made of none effect. The constant exhortation is, to make choice of God as the portion of the soul, to change the governing purpose of the life, to submit to the moral Governor of the universe. The specific act to which the sinner is urged as immediately connected with salvation, is an act which has no reference to Christ. The soul is brought immediately in contact with God; the Mediator is left out of view. We maintain that this is another Gospel. It is practically another system, and a legal system of religion. We do not intend that the doctrine of the mediation of Christ is rejected, but that it is neglected; that the sinner is led to God directly; that he is not urged, under the pressure of the sense of guilt, to go to Christ for pardon, and through him to God; but the general idea of submission (not the specific idea of submission to the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ) is urged, or the making a right choice. Men are told they have hitherto chosen the world, all they have to do is to choose God; that they have had it as their purpose to gain the things of this life, and they must now change their purpose and serve God. Our objection is not now to the doctrines actually held by these brethren, but to their characteristic method of preaching, the effects of which we have had some opportunity of learning. Conviction of sin is made of little account, Christ and his atonement are kept out of view, so that the method of salvation is not distinctly presented to the minds of the people. The tendency of this defect, as far as it extends, is fatal to religion and the souls of men. The happiness is, that sinners are not under the influence of this kind of preaching alone; their religious character is not entirely formed by this mode of representing what God requires; but when excited by the pungency and power with which these brethren frequently address the conscience, and when aroused to the necessity of doing



something to secure the favour of God, they are influenced by the truth already lodged in their minds, or derived from the immediate perusal of the scriptures; and hence, under the influence of the Spirit of God, instead of following the directions of their teachers which would lead to God in some other way than through Christ, they feel their need of the Saviour, and go to him as the Gospel directs. It is in this way, we have no doubt, much of the evil of this lamentable neglect of the grand doctrines of the Gospel is prevented. But just so far as this defective mode of representing the mode of salvation has any influence, it is to introduce a radically new system of religion. We again remark, we do not doubt that if these preachers were asked if they meant to leave Christ thus out of view, and to direct sinners to God without his intervention, they would answer, No. But we are not speaking of what they may believe on the subject, but of the manner in which, both from the press and the pulpit, the great duty of the sinner under the Gospel is presented.

It was our intention to call the attention of our readers to the panacea which the reviewer has discovered (or rather undertaken to recommend) for the cure of all doctrinal differences. But our notice of his pamphlet has already been protracted to three times the length we originally intended, and we therefore have time to say but little on the subject. His prescription is, to draw a distinction between the doctrines of religion and the philosophy of the doctrines, which, he justly remarks, is an important distinction, which it is of the highest moment should be understood and properly applied. "*The doctrines of religion are the simple facts of Christianity. The philosophy of the doctrines is the mode adopted of stating and illustrating those facts in their relations to each other, to the human mind, to the whole character and government of God.*" From this distinction results the following most important practical principle of Christian fellowship and of theological discussion. *All who teach the leading facts or doctrines of Christianity are orthodox, though they differ greatly in their philosophy of those doctrines.*"—P. 31. The reviewer gives these passages in *italics*, to note his sense of their importance. We are constrained, however, to think that although they contain a very obvious and familiar truth, they are of little consequence for his purpose. The truth they contain is, that there is a distinction between the essentials and non-essentials of a doctrine. We care little about his calling doctrines *facts*. But how is this to aid any one in deciding on what is heresy, and what is not? The reviewer chooses to say that the fact which all the orthodox must receive respecting sin is, that it exists and that it is a dreadful evil. But how its existence is accounted for, is philosophising about it. But if I assert it exists by the immediate efficient agency of God, do not I assert a fact as much as when I say it exists? Or, if I say it exists because God cannot control a moral agent, do I not assert a fact? Again, the orthodox fact about man's natural character is,

that in consequence of the fall of Adam men sin, and only sin, until renewed by the Holy Spirit; the philosophy is in accounting for it. But is it not obvious, that when the church declares that the universality of actual sin is to be accounted for by a sinful corruption of nature, she means to declare that the scriptures account for one fact by another? When it is said, we are condemned for the sin of Adam, is it not a fact again asserted? We think, therefore, the reviewer's distinction between facts and the philosophy of them, perfectly futile. The use he would make of it is still worse. "All who teach the leading facts of Christianity are orthodox." But what are these facts? Let the reviewer state them and then he is orthodox; let Edwards state them and he is a heretic. The substance of the fact regarding man's character is, that *somehow*, in consequence of the fall, he sins, and only sins, &c. Is not this a bald *petitio principii*? That *somehow* may be the very thing which the scriptures clearly reveal, and reveal as a *fact*. Again: it is a fact that we are saved by the death of Christ—this we have stated as the *doctrine* of atonement. Yet, as so stated, there is not a Socinian in the world who is not orthodox on this point. This fact is not all that the scriptures teach, nor that it is necessary to believe. The death of Christ saves us, and saves us as a sacrifice. That it operates in this mode, and not in another, is as much a matter of fact, as that it operates at all. Again: it is a fact that men are renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. But here again, all Arminians, Pelagians, and even Socinians, are orthodox; for they admit the fact as much as the reviewer does (allowing them to make the spirit of God mean "divine energy"). They and he might philosophise rather differently about it; but the fact they all admit. How the Spirit does the work is a matter of explanation; some say, by an immediate influence on the mind; others, by moral suasion, or presenting motives; others, by having revealed the truth in the scriptures; so that the result may be ascribed either to the truth as the immediate cause, or to its revealer, the Spirit. And so, finally, though illustrations might be multiplied without end, the scriptures are a divine revelation; here is a fact in which it would seem all might acquiesce and be orthodox, without asking how God reveals truth to man. Yet this fact the neologists of Germany hold and proclaim. It is true, when they come to the *philosophy* of the fact, they tell us they mean that the scriptures are a providential revelation from God, in the same sense as the Dialogues of Plato.

It is too obvious to need comment, that the reviewer's position is all that any man in the world, who professes any form of Christianity, needs to prove his orthodoxy. Let him have the stating of scriptural facts, and he will do as the reviewer in many cases has done, state them so generally, that Arminians, Pelagians, and Socinians, as well as Calvinists, can adopt them, and, according to this standard, be orthodox.

We have spoken of this anonymous pamphlet with sincerity:

that is, as we really felt. We view it as highly objectionable in the respect to which we have principally referred. Whoever the writer may be, we think he has more reason to lament having given occasion to the Christian public to ask how his statements can be reconciled with notorious facts, than to be offended at the strictures to which it may, and ought to subject him.



## ESSAY XIV.

### BEMAN ON THE ATONEMENT.\*

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THE doctrine of which this little book treats has always been regarded as the cardinal doctrine of the Gospel. It was the burden of apostolical preaching; the rock of offence to Jews and Greeks; the corner-stone of that temple in which God dwells by his Spirit. The cross is the symbol of Christianity; that in which every believer glories, as the only ground of his confidence toward God. The rejection of this doctrine, therefore, has always been regarded, and is, in fact, a rejection of the Gospel. It is the repudiation of the way of salvation revealed by God, and the adoption of some method not only different but irreconcilable. Whatever, therefore, affects the integrity of this doctrine, affects the whole system of religion. It lies in such immediate contact with the source of all spiritual life, that the very nature of religion depends on the manner in which it is apprehended. Though all moral and religious truths are in their nature sources of power, and never fail to influence, more or less, the character of those who embrace them, yet some truths are more powerful, and hence more important than others. We may speculate with comparative impunity on the nature of angels, on the origin of evil, on the purposes of God, on his relation to the world, and even on the grounds and nature of human responsibility; but when we come to the question: How am I to gain access to God? how can I secure the pardon of my sins and acceptance with Him? what is the true ground of hope, and what must I do to place myself on that ground so as to secure the assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost? then the less we speculate the better. The nearer we keep to the simple, authoritative statements of God's word, the firmer will be our faith, the more full and free our access to God, and the more harmonious and healthful our whole religious experience. Such is the informing influence of such experience, when it is genuine; that is, when really guided by the

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Spirit and conformed to the revelation of God, that it effects a far nearer coincidence of views in all the children of God than the multiplicity of sects and conflicting systems of theology would lead us to imagine. The mass of true Christians, in all denominations, get their religion directly from the Bible, and are but little affected by the peculiarities of their creeds. And even among those who make theology a study, there is often one form of doctrine for speculation, and another, simpler and truer, for the closet. Metaphysical distinctions are forgot in prayer, or under the pressure of real conviction of sin, and need of pardon and of divine assistance. Hence it is that the devotional writings of Christians agree far nearer than their creeds. It may be taken for granted that that mode of stating divine truth, which is most in accordance with the devotional language of true Christians; which best expresses those views which the soul takes when it appropriates the doctrines of the Gospel for its own spiritual emergencies, is the truest and the best.

How, then, does the believer regard the person and work of Christ in his own exercises of faith, gratitude, or love? What is the language in which those exercises are expressed? If we look to the devotional writings of the church, in all ages and countries, and of all sects and names, we shall get one clear, consistent answer. What David wrote three thousand years ago, expresses, with precision, the emotions of God's people now. The hymns of the early Christians, of the Lutherans, the Reformed, of Moravians, of British and American Christians, all express the common consciousness of God's people; they all echo the words and accents in which the truth came clothed from the mouth of God, and in which, in spite of the obstructions of theological theories, it finds its way to every believing heart. Now, one thing is very plain, Dr. Beman's theory of the atonement never could be learnt from the devotional language of the church; ours can. Everything we believe on the subject is inwrought, not only in the language of the Bible, but in the language of God's people, whether they pray or praise, whether they mourn or rejoice. We have, therefore, the heart of the church on our side, at least.

It lies on the very surface of the scriptures:—1. That all men are sinners. 2. That sin, for its own sake, and not merely to prevent others from sinning, deserves punishment. 3. That God is just; that is, disposed, from the very excellence of his nature, to treat his creatures as they deserve, to manifest his favour to the good, and his disapprobation towards the wicked. 4. That to propitiate God, to satisfy his righteous justice, the Son of God assumed our nature, was made under the law, fulfilled all righteousness, bore our sins, the chastisement or punishment of which was laid on him. 5. That by his righteousness, those that believe are constituted righteous; that his merit is so given, reckoned or imputed to them, that they are regarded and treated as righteous in the sight of God. These truths, which lie on the surface of the scrip-

ture, are wrought into the very soul of the church, and are, in fact, its life. Yet every one of them, except the first, Dr. Beman either expressly or virtually denies.

He denies that sin for its own sake deserves punishment. He everywhere represents the prevention of crime as the great end to be answered by punishment, even in the government of God. If that end can be otherwise answered, then justice is satisfied; the necessity and propriety of punishment ceases. This is the fundamental principle of the whole system, and is avowed or implied upon almost every page. His argument in proof that repentance is not a sufficient ground for pardon, is that it has no tendency to prevent crime in others. In human governments, he says, punishment is designed to prevent a repetition of crime by the criminal, and to prevent its commission by others. The former of these ends might be answered by repentance, but not the latter. So in the case of the divine government, repentance on the part of the sinner might, "so far as his moral feelings are concerned," render it consistent in God to forgive, but then "Where is the honour of the law? Where is the good of the universe?"—P. 57. The design of "penalty is to operate as a powerful motive to obedience."—P. 127. There is, he says, the same necessity for atonement as for the penalty of the moral law, and that necessity he uniformly represents as a necessity "to secure the order and prosperity of the universe."—P. 128.

It is of course admitted that the prevention of crime is one of the effects, and consequently one of the ends of punishment. But to say that it is *the* end, that it is so the ground of its infliction, that all necessity for punishment ceases when that end is answered, is to deny the very nature of sin. The ideas of right and wrong are simple ideas, derived immediately from our moral nature. And it is included in those ideas that what is right deserves approbation, and what is wrong deserves disapprobation, for their own sake, and entirely irrespective of the consequences which are to flow from the expression of this moral judgment concerning them. When a man sins he feels that he deserves to suffer, or, as the apostle expresses it, that he is "worthy of death." But what is this feeling? Is it that he ought to be punished to prevent others from sinning? So far from this being the whole of the feeling, it is no part of it. If the sinner were alone in the universe, if there was no possibility of others being affected by his example, or by his impunity, the sense of ill-desert would exist in all its force. For sin is that which in itself, and for itself, irrespective of all consequences, deserves ill. This is the very nature of it, and to deny this is to deny that there is really any such thing as sin. There may be acts which tend to promote happiness, and others which tend to destroy it; but there is no morality in such tendency merely, any more than there is health and sickness. The nature of moral acts may be evinced by their tendency, but that tendency does not constitute their nature. To love God, to reverence excellence, to



forgive injuries, all tend to promote happiness, but no man, who has a moral sense in exercise, can say that they are right only because of such tendency. They are right, because they are right, in virtue of their own inherent nature. And the opposite dispositions or acts are in their nature evil, irrespective of their tendency to produce misery.

The theory that the end of punishment, even in the divine government, is to prevent crime, is only one expression of the more general theory, that happiness is the end of creation, and that all holiness is resolvable into benevolence. This theory is a product of the mere understanding, and does violence to the instinctive moral judgment of men. We know that holiness is something more than a means; that to be happy is not the end and reason for being holy; that enjoyment is not the highest end of being. Our moral nature cannot be thus obliterated, and right and wrong made matters of profit and loss. The command not to do evil that good may come, would on this theory be a contradiction, since that ceases to be evil which produces good. All virtue is thus resolved into expediency, and the doctrine that the end sanctifies the means becomes the fundamental principle of virtue. It is strange that even when the moral feelings are in abeyance, and men are engaged in spinning from the intellect, a theory that will reduce to unity the conflicting facts of the moral world, they could adopt a view which reduces all intelligent beings to mere recipients of happiness, and degrades the higher attributes of their nature into mere instruments of enjoyment; a theory which meets its refutation in every moral emotion, and which has proved itself false by its practical effects. We may safely appeal to the convictions of every man's breast, against this whole theory, and against the doctrine that sin is punished and deserves punishment only as a warning to others. No man, when humbled under the sense of his guilt in the sight of God, can resist the conviction of the inherent ill-desert of sin. He feels that it would be right that he should be made to suffer, nay, that rectitude, justice, or moral excellence demands his suffering; and the hardest thing for the sinner to believe, is, often, that it can be consistent with the moral excellence of God, to grant him forgiveness. Into this feeling the idea of counteracting the progress of sin, or promoting the good of the universe, does not in any measure enter. The feeling would be the same though there were no universe. It is ill-desert and not the general good, which every man feels in his own case, is the ground of his just liability to punishment. And without this feeling there can be no conviction of sin. We may also appeal against this metaphysical theory to the universal consciousness of men. Though it is admitted that governmental reasons properly enter into the considerations which determine the nature and measure of punishment, yet it is the universal and intuitive judgment of men, that the criminal could not be rightly punished merely for the public good, if he did not deserve to be punished irrespective of that

good. His suffering benefits the public because it is deserved ; it is not deserved because it benefits the public. That this is the universal judgment of men is proved by every exhibition of their feelings on this subject. When any atrocious crime is committed, the public indignation is aroused. And when the nature of that indignation is examined, it becomes manifest that it arises from a sense of the inherent ill-desert of the crime ; that it is a sense of justice, and not a regard to the good of society which produces the demand for punishment. To allow such a criminal to escape with impunity, is felt to be an outrage against justice, and not against benevolence. If the public good was the grand end of punishment, then if the punishment of the innocent would promote that most effectually, the innocent should suffer instead of the guilty ; consequently if murders would be most restrained by the execution of the wives and children of the assassins, it would be right and obligatory to execute them, and not the perpetrators of the crime. If this would shock every man, let him ask himself why. What is the reason that the execution of an innocent woman for the public good, would be an atrocity, when the execution of the guilty husband is regarded as a duty ? It is simply because the guilty deserve punishment irrespective of the good of society. And if so, then the public good is not the ground of punishment in the government of God, but the inherent ill-desert of sin. Men in all ages have evinced this deep-seated sense of justice. Every sacrifice ever offered to God, to propitiate his favour, was an expression of the conviction that the sin for its own sake deserved punishment. To tell a man who brought his victim to the altar, that the real philosophy of his conduct was to express a desire for his own reformation, or for the good of society, would be a mockery. Such an idea never entered any human heart, when in the presence of God and seeking his forgiveness.

It is not pretended that this theory is taught in the Bible. It purports to be a philosophy. The Bible contradicts it on every page, because every page contains some expression of genuine human feeling, of the conviction of the real difference between right and wrong, of a true sense of sin, or of the great truth that our responsibility is to God, and not to the universe. The doctrine therefore that sin is punished merely to preserve the order and prosperity of the universe, is an utterly false and revolting theory ; inconsistent with the intuitive moral judgments of men, subversive of all moral distinctions, irreconcilable with the experience of every man when really convinced of sin, and contradicted by everything the Bible teaches on the subject.

Dr. Beman again denies, and it is essential to his system that he should deny, the justice of God. He admits that God has a disposition to promote the welfare of his creatures, and so to order his moral government as to make it produce the greatest amount of happiness. This however is benevolence, and not justice. The two sentiments are perfectly distinct. This our own consciousness

teaches. We know that pity is not reverence, that gratitude is not compassion, and we know just as well that justice is not benevolence. The two are perfectly harmonious, and are but different exhibitions of moral excellence. The judge of all the earth must do right. It is right to promote happiness, and it is right to punish sin; but to refer the punishment of sin to the desire to promote happiness, is to attribute but one form of moral excellence to God, and to make his excellence less comprehensive than our own. Dr. Beman speaks of commutative, distributive, and general justice. The former has relation only to the regulation of property, and has nothing to do with this subject. Distributive justice consists in the distribution of rewards and punishments, according to merit or demerit. General justice, he says, embraces the general principles of virtue or benevolence by which God governs the universe. The second kind, he correctly says, is justice in the common and appropriate sense of the word.—P. 131. When we say that he denies the justice of God, we mean that he denies that justice, in its common and appropriate sense, is an essential attribute of the divine nature. There is nothing in his nature that leads to the punishment of sin, but benevolence, or a regard to the happiness of the universe. If that is secured, sin and all sin may go unpunished for ever. This, we say, is a denial of divine justice.

It is a principle of our nature, and a command of God, that we should regard him as absolutely perfect; that every moral excellence which we find in ourselves we should refer to him in an infinite degree. Why do we believe that God is merciful, but because he has so made us that we approve of mercy, and because he has in his word declared himself to be full of compassion? Our moral nature is as much a revelation of God's perfections, as the heavens are of his wisdom and power. If therefore he has implanted in us a sentiment of justice, distinct from that of benevolence, we are constrained by the very constitution of our nature to refer that perfection to God. All men in fact do it. It enters into the sense of responsibility, into the nature of remorse, and into that fearful looking for of judgment which manifest themselves in every human breast. Men know that God is just, for they in their measure are just; and they instinctively fear the punishment of their sins. To be told that God is only benevolent, that he punishes only when the happiness of his government requires it, is to destroy our whole allegiance to God, and to do violence to the constitution of our nature. This is a doctrine that can only be held as a theory. It is in conflict with the most intimate moral convictions of men. This, as already remarked, is evinced by the sacrificial rites of all ages and nations, which derive their whole character and import from the assumption that God is just. If justice is merged into benevolence, they cease to have any significance as propitiatory offerings. If, then, distributive justice, justice "in its common and appropriate sense," is by the common consciousness of men declared to be a virtue, it is thereby revealed to belong to God; and he can no



more cease to be just, than he can cease to be benevolent or holy. This is only saying that if moral excellence leads us to judge that sin in itself deserves punishment, then the infinite moral excellence of God cannot but lead him to treat it as it deserves.

Again: it is included in our conception of God as absolutely independent and self-sufficient, that the reasons of his acts should be in himself. He is absolutely perfect, he acts with undeviating rectitude, and by so acting he promotes the highest good of his creatures. But the good of his creatures is not the end of his actions, for of him and through him and to him are all things. It is to subordinate God to the creature, to make the creature the end of his actions. He rewards one man and punishes another, not because he will thus make others happy, but because it is right, and by doing right the greatest good to others is the result. This is the view which both reason and scripture present of God as infinite and self-sufficient, who is the beginning and the end of all things. It is hence plain how the justice of God necessarily flows from his holiness. He is so holy that he delights in all that is good, and hates all that is evil; and if he acts agreeably to his nature, he constantly manifests this love of excellence and hatred of sin. But what is reward and punishment but the manifestation of the approbation or disapprobation of God? If holiness is communion with him, sin is alienation from him; if his favour goes out towards the one, his displeasure goes out towards the other; if the one is attracted, the other is repelled. The attributes of God are not so many distinct qualities, but one perfection of excellence, diversified in our conceptions, by the diversity of the objects towards which it is manifested. The justice of God is therefore nothing but the holiness of God in relation to sin. So long as he is holy, he must be just; he must repel sin, which is the highest idea we can form of punishment. To say then that God punishes only for governmental reasons, is to destroy our very conception of his nature.

That distributive justice is an essential attribute of God, is therefore revealed to us in the very constitution of our nature, in which we find a sense of justice, which is no more a form of benevolence than it is of reverence. It is revealed in all the operations of conscience; in the common consciousness of men, as expressed in all their prayers, confessions and sacrificial rites. It is revealed in the scriptures in every possible way; in all they teach of the nature of God, of his holiness, of his hatred of sin, of his determination to punish it; in the institution of sacrifices, and in the law. If the precepts of the law are an expression of the divine perfection, so is the penalty. If the one declares what it is right for God to require, the other declares what it is right for him to inflict. If God does not command us to love him, merely to make his dominions happy, neither does he punish merely for the public good. The law is a revelation of what is right, and God will require and do right for its own sake, and not for another and a lower end. God then is just, and Dr. Beman and his theory, by denying that there

is any such attribute in God as justice distinct from benevolence, do equal violence to conscience, reason, and the Bible.

Dr. Beman, again, denies that Christ made a true and proper satisfaction to divine justice, and thus departs from the common faith of Christendom, and seriously vitiates the whole doctrine of redemption. It is well known that at the time of the Reformation there was no controversy between Protestants and Romanists either as to the necessity or nature of the atonement. All classes of Protestants and the church of Rome itself, united in teaching, 1. That the Son of God having assumed our nature obeyed and suffered in our stead, thereby making a true, proper, and complete satisfaction for our sins. And 2. That his righteousness was so given or imputed unto us as to constitute us righteous in the sight of God. The Romanists even reproached Protestants for not coming up to their doctrine on this subject, insisting that the satisfaction of Christ was not only full and equivalent, but superabundant. "Pretium," says the Cat. Rom. i., 5, 15, "quod Christus pro nobis persolvit, debitis nostris non par solum et aequale fuit, verum ea longe superavit." It is one of the standing heads of theology in the Romish systems, *Satisfactio Christi fuit de rigore justitiæ*, which they prove; and answer the common Socinian objections, viz., that such a satisfaction destroys the grace of salvation; that it is impossible that the temporal sufferings of Christ should have such efficacy, &c. As to their views of the second point above mentioned, it is enough to quote the following passage from Turretin, vol. ii., p. 709. "It is not questioned," he says, "whether the righteousness and merit of Christ are imputed to us; for this the Papists dare not deny. The Council of Trent, sess. vi., c. 8, says, 'Christ by his most holy passion on the cross merited justification for us, and satisfied God the Father in our behalf, and no one can be righteous to whom the merits of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are not communicated.' Hence Vasques in l. ii., q. 114, disp. 222, chap. i., says, 'We concede that not only what is within us, as sin, faith, righteousness, may be imputed to us, but also what is without us, as the merits and obedience of Christ; because not only what is within, but also what is without, on account of which something is given to us, is said to belong to us (*ad aliquem effectum*), as though they were really our own.' Bellarmin, lib. ii., de Justif., cap. vii., acknowledges the same thing, when he says, 'If Protestants meant only that the merits of Christ are imputed to us, because God gives them to us, so that we can present them to God for our sins, he having assumed the burden of making satisfaction for us, and of reconciling us to the Father, the doctrine would be true.' This is in fact precisely what we do mean. For when he adds, 'we hold that the righteousness of Christ is so imputed to us, as by it we become formally or inherently just,' he asserts what is gratuitous and false, on account of his own perverse and preposterous theory of moral justification."\*

\* It is characteristic of the church of Rome that while she holds the truth, she con-

The Lutheran church held the strictest form of doctrine as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, and as to justification. That church teaches that the sufferings of Christ were strictly penal, that his obedience and death made a full and proper satisfaction to the law and justice of God, and are imputed to the believers as the sole ground of their justification. We cannot swell our article with numerous citations in proof of a well known fact. In the *Apology for the Augsburg Confession*, p. 93, it is said, "*Christus, quia sine peccato subiit poenam peccati, et victima pro nobis factus est, sustulit illud jus legis, ne accuset, ne damnet hos qui credunt in ipsum, quia ipse est propitiatio pro eis, propter quam justi reputantur.*" In the *Form of Concord*, it is said, "*Justitia illa, quae coram Deo fidei aut credentibus et mera gratia imputatur, est obedientia, passio, et resurrectio Christi, quibus ille legi nostra causa satisfecit et peccata nostra expiavit.*"—P. 684. Again, p. 696. "*Humana natura sola, sine divinitate, aeterno omnipotenti Deo neque obedientia, neque passione pro totius mundi peccatis satisfacere valuisset. Divinitas vero sola sine humanitate inter Deum et nos mediatoris partes implere non potuisset. Cum autem. . . . obedientia illa Christi non sit unius duntaxat naturae, sed totius personae; ideo ea est perfectissima pro humano genere satisfactio et expiatio; qua aeternae et immutabili justitiae divinae . . . satis est factum.*"

It will not be necessary to prove that the Reformed churches held precisely the same doctrine. There was no controversy between them and the Lutherans either as to the nature of the satisfaction of Christ, or as to justification. They differed only as to the design of Christ's death, whether it had respect equally to all men, or had a special reference to his own people, a point which we hope to have room to discuss in the sequel of this article. We are now concerned only about the nature of the atonement. Bretschneider states, in a few words, the common doctrine on this subject of the two great divisions of the Protestant world. After saying that God, according to that doctrine, is immutably just, and therefore must punish sin, and yet being immutably benevolent, he determined to provide redemption, he proceeds, "For this it was necessary, 1. That some one in the place of men should fulfil the law which they ought to have kept, and 2. That some one should endure the punishment (*Strafen*) which they had incurred. This no mere man could do, for no man (since all are subject to original sin) could perfectly keep the law, and every man must suffer for his own sin. Neither could any divine person accomplish the task, since he could not sustain suffering and punishment. He alone who is at once God and man, with a human nature free from sin,

trives to make it of no effect by her traditions. Thus while she teaches that the merit of Christ is the ground of our justification, she makes those merits accessible only through her ministrations, and confounds justification and sanctification. And while she holds the truth as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, she chooses to confine it to original and mortal sins, that she may make room for her own doctrine of satisfaction by good works and penances. The infinite value of the Saviour's merit, she perverts as a source whence to derive the power to grant indulgences, &c.



could accomplish the work.”\* This righteousness, he adds, “God imputes to men as though they had wrought it out themselves.”

Against this doctrine of satisfaction to the divine justice the Socinians were the first to object.† Under the pressure of their objections the Remonstrants in Holland gave way, and Grotius in his work, *De Satisfactione Christi*, though defending in the main the catholic or common doctrine, introduced the principle, that the satisfaction of Christ was rendered to the governmental justice of God. Very far below the doctrine of Grotius, in many important respects, is the theory of Dr. Beman. In some cases he falls even below Socinus. “God, as the supreme governor,” he says, “must so conduct all his movements, whether of justice or mercy, as to leave on the minds of dependent creatures a deep and just impression, that the penalty of the law will be executed, and that the sinner must perish. *To fix this impression indelibly in the breast of the sinner, is the object of the atonement.*”—P. 41.‡ This, however, is probably a lapsus, such an one, however, as few men could make. He generally includes other intelligent creatures. Still, with him, the atonement is a mere method of instruction; a means to exhibit a certain truth for the moral restraint or improvement of those to whom it is made known. The gratuitous forgiveness of sin, it is said, would tend to produce the impression that God was indifferent to his law, and that sin might be committed with impunity. To counteract that impression, to teach, or declare that sin was, in the sight of God, an evil, and would be punished, and thus to open a way to exercise mercy, without weakening the motive to obedience, is the design of the death of Christ. Justice, in its “common appropriate sense,” he says, “was not satisfied by the atonement of Jesus Christ.”—P. 131. “The law, or justice, that is, distributive justice, as expressed in the law, has received no satisfaction at all.”—P. 133. So far as the atonement secured the government of God from the evils of gratuitous forgiveness, it was a satisfaction to his benevolence, but not to justice in any other sense.—P. 182. It was designed to teach a certain truth; it is “a symbolical and substantive expression of God’s regard to the moral law.”—P. 35. “It furnishes an expression of his regard for the moral law,” and “evinces his determination to punish sin.”—P. 91. “To fix indelibly this impression on the heart of the sinner is the object of the atonement.”—P. 42.

Our first remark on this subject, after showing, as we think we

\* Bretschneider’s *Handbuck der Dogmatik*, vol. ii., p. 266.

† In the Racovian Catechism, it is asked, “Did Christ die that he might, properly speaking, merit our salvation, or, in like manner, properly speaking, discharge the debt due for our sins? *Ans.* Although Christians generally now hold that opinion, yet the sentiment is false, erroneous, and exceedingly pernicious.”

‡ Socinus taught that the atonement was designed, 1. To confirm the new covenant and all its promises, especially those of the pardon of sin, and of eternal life. 2. To assure us of the love of God. 3. To induce us to embrace the Gospel. 4. To encourage us by his example to trust in God. 5. To abrogate the old dispensation, &c.

have done, that the whole basis of this theory is false, is that it is destitute of any semblance of support from scripture. It hardly purports to be anything more than a hypothesis on which to reconcile what the Bible teaches with our views of moral government. It is a device to make the atonement rational, to explain away the mystery which hangs over it, and makes the whole august transaction perfectly intelligible. Dr. Beman says that the doctrine of the atonement enters "into the very texture of revelation, warp and woof." It is, he says, "the vital principle, in the very heart of the Gospel."—P. 62. Surely then we have a right to have it treated as "a purely biblical question," as he affirms it to be. Yet in his chapter on the nature of the atonement, as far as we can find, he refers but to one solitary text in the whole Bible! It is a theory woven warp and woof out of the understanding, not even out of the conscience. The solitary passage which Dr. Beman cites as teaching his doctrine is Rom. iii. 25, where it is said that God set forth Christ as a propitiation for our sins, to declare his righteousness. "The object of the atonement," he says, "is here stated in explicit terms. It was required and made in order to open a consistent way for the publication of pardon, or for the exercise of grace to sinners. Its purpose was to declare the righteousness or moral rectitude and perfection of God in dispensing, in this instance, with the literal execution of the penalty of the law, and in bestowing eternal life upon those who deserved to die."—P. 124. He afterwards, p. 132, says, the words just and righteousness as here used have "no direct reference to law," but express "those principles of virtue or benevolence by which we are bound to regulate our conduct, and by which God governs the universe." Then of course the passage might be rendered, "Christ was set forth as a propitiation to declare the benevolence of God, that he might be benevolent even in remitting the sins of those that believe;" an interpretation which needs no refutation. The first remark then to be made on this passage is, that it teaches the very reverse of what it is cited to prove. Dr. Beman himself says that in their "common and appropriate sense," the words just and justice have reference to law, and express what he calls distributive justice. Then if the language of the apostle is to be taken in a "common and appropriate sense," it teaches that the propitiation of Christ was designed as an exhibition of justice in its proper sense, in order to make it apparent that God was just even in remitting sin; that the demands of justice had not been sacrificed, but on the contrary fully satisfied. It is only by taking the words in a sense that is inappropriate and unusual, that any other doctrine can be got out of the passage. Besides, Dr. Beman's interpretation is not only in direct opposition to the common meaning of the words, but to the necessary sense of the context. Satisfaction to justice is the formal idea of a propitiation; and saying that Christ was a propitiation, is only saying in other words, that our sins were laid on him, that he bore the

chastisement or punishment of our sins, in order that God might be just, in justifying those that believe. Again : this interpretation is agreeable to the sense in which the words just, righteous, righteousness, &c., are familiarly used by the apostle. Is God unrighteous, he asks, who taketh vengeance ? Rom iii. 5. He denounces the divine judgment, by saying, God will cut short the work in righteousness. Rom. ix. 28. See also 2 Thess. i. 5, 6. The obvious sense then of the passage in Romans iii. 25, is the opposite to that which Dr. Beman gives it.\*

But if we admit that the passage in question does teach that the atonement was designed to set forth God's regard for the good of the universe, what then ? would it establish Dr. Beman's theory ? Far from it. It is one of the most common fallacies of theological writers, to seize upon some one passage, and shutting their eyes to all others, assume that it teaches the whole truth on a given subject. The death of Christ was designed to answer manifold ends, more perhaps than it has yet entered into the heart of man to imagine. It would be the extreme of folly to take one of those ends, and infer that its attainment was its whole design, or let us into the full knowledge of its nature. Is it not said a hundred times that the death of Christ was designed to exhibit the love of God ? does this prove that it does not display his righteousness ? It is said to declare his wisdom ; does that prove it does not display his love ? It was designed to bring us unto God, but does that prove it was not also an atonement ? It is not by taking any one view, or any one text, that we can arrive at the truth. We must have a theory which will embrace all the facts ; a doctrine which includes all the revelations God has made on this subject. The objection to Dr. Beman's view of the design of Christ's death is not that it is false, but that it is defective. It states only a part, and a subordinate part of the truth. The atonement is an exhibition of God's purpose to maintain his law and to inflict its penalty, and thus to operate as a restraint and a motive on all intelligent beings, because it involves the execution of that penalty. It is this that gives it all its power. It would be no exhibition of justice, if it were not an exercise of justice ; it would not teach that the penalty of law must be inflicted, unless it was inflicted. We hold all the little truth there is in Dr. Beman's doctrine, but we hold unspeakably more.

\* "We see ourselves obliged," says Tholuck, "to admit, in this place, the idea of distributive justice (*vergeltende Gerechtigkeit*)." He afterwards says that the loss of that idea in theology has occasioned "unspeakable evil," and that the doctrine of atonement "must remain sealed up until it is acknowledged." See his *Römerbrief*, ed. 1812. He refers with approbation to Usteri's exposition of this passage in his *Paulinischer Lehrbegriff*. On turning to that author we find he says, his object is to prove "that the representation contained in Rom. iii. 24, 25, viz., that God, to declare his righteousness, laid on Christ the punishment of the sins of men, is the doctrine of Paul." And he accordingly goes on to prove it, particularly from Rom. viii. 3. Usteri is one of those writers who do not feel called upon to believe what the scripture teaches, though they make it a point of honour to state its meaning fairly.



Our immediate object, however, is to call attention to the entire absence of all scriptural support for this theory. We have already shown that the only passage directly referred to does not teach what it is cited to prove, and that if it did, it would give no support to the theory built upon it. The surprising fact, however, should be more distinctly noticed, that while the Bible is said to be full of the doctrine of atonement, scarcely an attempt is made to prove its nature from the Bible. Christ is said to be a sacrifice, to bear our sins, to be a propitiation, a ransom, &c., &c., but no attempt is made to tell us what all this means. There is no examination of the terms, no elucidation of the meaning they bore in the age of the apostles. The writer does not even pretend to found his theory upon them. In the chapter in which he gives his own view of the nature of the atonement, they are scarcely even mentioned. The whole affair is a piece of pure Rationalistic speculation, formed on certain principles of moral philosophy which have nothing to do with the Bible. It is assumed that happiness is the end of all things; that to promote happiness is the essence of virtue; that the prevention of crime, which causes misery, is the end of punishment; that the death of Christ, as it tends to prevent crime, supersedes the necessity of punishment. There is the theory. And we can hardly avoid saying that it has more affinity with Jeremy Bentham, and "the greatest happiness" system, than it has with the Bible, or with the sympathies of Christians.

Our next remark on this theory is that it is perfectly arbitrary. The Bible teaches that Christ was a sacrifice, that he bore our sins, that the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him; that he propitiated God; was a ransom; was made sin, that we might be made righteous. These and similar statements set forth the nature of the atonement. There are many others describing some of its manifold effects. It declared the justice of God, exhibited his wisdom, set us an example, purifies his people, and in short, glorifies God and promotes the best interests of his kingdom. If you take in the former statements, there is perfect unity in all these representations. The work of Christ is a display of the justice and love of God, it leads men to repentance, and exerts this moral influence on the universe, because it is a satisfaction to divine justice, and answers the demands of his law. But if the scriptural account of its nature be rejected, then it is a matter to be arbitrarily decided, which of its effects shall be selected as determining its character. If Dr. Beman says it is an atonement because it expresses God's regard to the order and welfare of his government: Socinus may say, it is an atonement because it assures us of the love of God. The one is just as much right as the other; for both are right as far as they go; but both are arbitrary in selecting what suits their taste, or their philosophy, and rejecting all the rest. Dr. Beman does not pretend that his doctrine is taught in those passages of scripture which really describe the nature of the atonement, neither does Socinus. Both

say all that is figurative. The one says its nature is to be inferred from one of its effects, the other from another; the one considers it as designed mainly to teach God's rectoral justice, the other his love. It is perfectly plain that on this plan the citadel is surrendered. Dr. Beman can have nothing to say to the Socinian, which the Socinian cannot retort on Dr. Beman. Both admit that we are saved by the death of Christ; the one affirming that it is because it brings us to repentance, and thus makes our forgiveness consistent with the character of God and the interests of his kingdom; the other, that it is because it reconciles forgiveness with the good of the universe, in a different way.

It may also on this ground be made a fair subject of debate, which view really assigns most importance to the death of Christ. Is it clear that fear is more conservative than love? that the exhibition of God's regard to law would have a greater effect in promoting holiness than the exhibition of his mercy? We very much doubt it. And we confess ourselves very much at a loss to see, why the Socinian view of the design of the Redeemer's death should be regarded as a rejection of the doctrine of atonement, if his death was merely designed to exert a conservative influence on the moral government of God. Certain it is that this is not the doctrine against which the early Socinians contended.

It is further plain that the principles of interpretation which Dr. Beman is obliged to adopt to reconcile his theory with the Bible, are all that is wanted to serve the purpose of Socinians. They both deny that we are to take the language of scripture according to its "common and appropriate sense," and agreeably to the mode of thinking prevalent in the age in which it was uttered. The vastly different views entertained by Dr. Beman and Socinus as to the person of Christ, make of course a corresponding difference in their whole religious system. But as to the nature of the atonement, we have always considered the ground advocated by Dr. Beman, as utterly untenable against the arguments of Socinians. It is a rejection of the scriptural account, and after that is done, one theory has as much authority as another.

Our third remark is, that this theory, besides being independent of scripture, and perfectly arbitrary, is directly opposed to the explicit teaching of the word of God. Be it remembered that the Bible is admitted to be full of the doctrine of the atonement; that it is the great central point in the religion of redeemed man. It is also admitted that God has revealed not only the fact that we are saved by the obedience and death of Christ, but also the way in which his work is efficacious to that end. The Socinian says, it is by its moral effect upon men; Dr. Beman says, it is from its tendency to prevent crime and preserve the order of the universe; the common faith of Christendom is, that Christ saves us by satisfying the demands of law and justice in our stead. As the Bible is full of this doctrine it must enable us to decide which of these views is right, for the Bible was intended to teach us the way of

salvation. We are taught then first, that *Christ bore our sins*. Heb. ix. 28, 1 Pet. ii. 24, Is. liii. 12, &c. It cannot be disputed that the usual scriptural meaning of the expression, *to bear sin*, is to bear the punishment due to sin. Lev. xxii. 9. If they keep not my ordinance "they shall bear sin for it." Num. xviii. 22, xiv. 33, Lev. v. 1, 17. "He is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity." Ez. xviii. 20. "The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." No one doubts that this means, the son shall not be punished for the sins of the father, nor the father for the sins of the son. When therefore the scriptures say that Christ bore our sins, they say in express terms, that he bore the punishment of our sins. This is rendered the more certain, because he bore them by suffering, or by dying; and because the scriptures express this same idea in so many other ways. This account of the nature of the atonement is found not only in poetical descriptions of Christ's sufferings, but in the most didactic portions of the Bible. The language used had an established sense in the minds of those to whom it was addressed, who could not fail to understand it according to its obvious meaning. That meaning, therefore, we are bound, by all sound rules of interpretation, to believe the sacred writers intended to convey. How does Dr. Beman answer this? Does he attempt to show that the phrase "to bear sin" does commonly mean to bear the punishment of sin? or that it has not that meaning when used in reference to Christ? As far as we have been able to find, he contents himself with some general remarks against taking figurative language in its literal sense. He subjects the passages, in which the phrase in question occurs, to no critical examination. He makes no attempt to show that figurative language may not convey a definite meaning, or that that meaning is not to be learnt from usage, and the known opinions of those to whom it is addressed. It is enough for him that he does not like the truth, which the passages in question would then teach; that he cannot see how the innocent could so take the place of the guilty as to bear their punishment; that he cannot reconcile this doctrine with the justice of God, nor with his views of other portions of scripture. In the meantime the plain meaning of the scriptures stands, and those who find all other scriptural representations consistent with that meaning, and to whom it is in fact the very ground of their hope towards God, will receive it gladly, and in all its simplicity. The theory of Dr. Beman, then, which denies that Christ suffered the penalty due to our sins, must be admitted to be in direct conflict with these express declarations of the word of God.\*

\* Prof. Stuart, in his Commentary and Excursus on Heb. ix. 28, says, "*To bear the sins of others*, is to bear or endure the penalty due to them." Having proved this, he adds, "The sentiment of the clause then clearly is, that Jesus by his death (which could take place but once), endured the penalty that our sins deserved, or bore the sorrows due to us." What he further says, that the sufferings of Christ



Secondly, the scriptures, in order to teach us the nature of atonement, say that Christ offered himself as a sacrifice unto God. What, then, is, according to the scriptures, a sacrifice for sins? "The essence of a propitiatory sacrifice," says Storr, "is the forgiveness of sin, through the transfer of punishment from the actual offender to another."\* The moderate Bishop Burnett says: "The notion of an expiatory sacrifice which was then, when the New Testament was writ, well understood all the world over, both by Jews and Gentiles, was this, that the sin of one person was transferred on a man or beast, who upon that was devoted or offered to God, and suffered in the room of the offending person; and, by this oblation, the punishment of the sin being laid on the sacrifice, an expiation was made for sin, and the sinner was believed to be reconciled to God."† That this is the correct view of the scriptural doctrine concerning sacrifices, may be inferred:—1. From its being confessedly the light in which they were generally regarded by the Jews and by the whole ancient world, and from its being a simple and natural explanation of the service. On this hypothesis, everything is significant and intelligible. 2. From the express didactic statements of the Bible. The life is said to be in the blood, and "I have given it to you as an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul (life)." Lev. xvii. 11. The very nature of the service, then, was the substitution of life for life. The life forfeited was redeemed by the life paid. 3. From all the rites connected with the service, and all the expressions employed concerning it. There was to be confession of sin, imposition of hands (as expressing the idea of transfer and substitution), the sins were said to be laid on the head of the victim, which was then put to death, or, as in the case of the scape-goat, dismissed into the wilderness, and another goat sacrificed in its place. All these directions plainly teach that the nature of expiatory offerings consisted in the substitution of the victim for the offender, and in the infliction of the penalty of death incurred by the one upon the other. 4. That this is the scriptural doctrine on this subject, is made still plainer by the fact, that all that is taught by saying that the Messiah bore our sins, that our iniquities were laid upon him, that he bore our sorrows, that the chastisement of our peace was laid on him, is expressed by the prophet by saying, He made "his soul an offering for sin." Then an offering for sin is one on whom sin is laid, who bears sins, i. e., as has been shown, the penalty due to sin. 5. This view of the subject is further confirmed by a consideration of the effects ascribed

were not in *all respects*, and considered in every point of view, an exact and specific *quid pro quo*, as it regards the penalty threatened against sin, that the Saviour did not suffer a guilty conscience, or despair, would be pertinent, had he first proved that any respectable body of Christians held any such doctrine, or that a guilty conscience, or despair, is an essential part of the penalty of the law.

\* Zweck des Todes Jesu. § 8.

† Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles. Article 2.

to these sacrifices. They made atonement; they propitiated God; they secured the remission of the penalty incurred. When an Israelite had committed any offence by which he forfeited his standing in the theocracy (that is, the favour of God as his theocratical ruler), he brought to the priest the appointed sacrifice, made confession of his sin, the victim was slain in his place, and he was restored to his standing, and saved from being cut off from his people. These sacrifices always produced these effects; they always secured the remission of the theocratical penalty for which they were offered and accepted. Whether they secured the forgiveness of the soul before God, depended on the state of mind of the offerer. Of themselves they had no such efficacy, since it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin. But nothing is plainer from scripture than that the way in which the Israelites obtained the remission of the civil or theocratical penalties which they had incurred, was intended to teach us how sin is pardoned in the sight of God through Jesus Christ.

If, then, the Bible, according to the almost unanimous judgment of Christians, teaches that the idea of an expiatory sacrifice is, that by vicarious punishment justice is satisfied and sin forgiven; if this was the view taken of them by Jews and Gentiles, then does the Bible, in so constantly representing Christ as a propitiation, as a lamb, as a sacrifice for sin, expressly teach that he bore the penalty due to our sins, that he satisfied divine justice, and secured, for all in whose behalf that sacrifice is accepted, the pardon of sin and restoration to the divine favour. To talk of figure here is out of the question. Admit that the language is figurative, the question is, what idea was it intended to convey? Beyond doubt that which the sacred writers knew with certainty would be attached to it by their immediate readers, and which, in fact, has been attached to it in all ages of the church.\* To tell a conscience-stricken Israelite that a sacrifice was designed either to impress his own mind, or the mind of others, with the truth that God is just or benevolent, would have been a mockery. It was to him an atonement, a propitiation, a vicarious punishment, or it was nothing. And it is no less a mockery to tell a convinced sinner that the death of Christ was designed to lead him to repentance, or to preserve the good order of the universe. Unless the Redeemer was a sacrifice, on whom our sins were laid, who bore the penalty we had incurred, it is, to such a sinner, no atonement, and no adequate ground of confidence toward God.†

\* "It is not possible for us to preserve," says Bishop Burnet, "any reverence for the New Testament, or the writers of it, so far as to think them even honest men, not to say inspired men, if we can imagine, that in so sacred and important a matter they could exceed so much as to represent that a sacrifice which is not truly so. This is a subject which will not bear figures and amplifications; it must be treated strictly, and with a just exactness of expression."—*Burnet on the Thirty-Nine Articles, the same page quoted above.*

† "The innate sense of divine justice, which all men possess, demands that the sinner should receive his due, that the stroke he has given to the law, should recoil

Again: it is a part of the common faith of the church, that Jesus Christ is a true and proper priest; that what was symbolical and figurative with regard to other priests, is real as it regards him. He is called a priest; it is proved that he has all the qualifications for the office; that he was divinely appointed; that he performed all its duties, secures all its benefits; and that his priesthood supercedes all others. We are accordingly commanded to come to him in the character of a priest; to commit our souls into his hands, that he may reconcile us to God, and make intercession for us. This is the scriptural method of representing the manner in which Christ saves us, and the nature of his work. Dr. Beman, in his chapter on the "Fact of the Atonement," which is directed against Socinians, avails himself of all the usual sources of scriptural proof; and, in the course of the chapter, is forced to speak of Christ as a sacrifice and a Priest. But when he comes to the exposition of his views of the nature of the atonement, he finds it expedient, and even necessary, to leave that mode of representation entirely out of view. We hear no more of propitiating God, of Christ as a sacrifice, of his character as a Priest. It is now all moral government, the order and interest of the universe, symbolical teaching, exhibition of truth and motives. Why is all this? Why does not Dr. Beman's doctrine admit of being thrown into the scriptural form? Why must the terms sacrifice, priest, propitiation, be discarded when teaching the nature of the atonement? For the very obvious reason that there is an entire incongruity between his views and the word of God. What has a sacrifice and priest to do with governmental display? This fact alone works the condemnation of Dr. Beman's whole theory. His plan of salvation, his method of access to God, is irreconcilable with that presented in the scriptures. There we are taught that, as the Israelite who had offended came to the priest, who made an atonement for him in the appointed way, and thus reconciled him to God, so the penitent sinner must come to Christ as his High Priest, who satisfies the divine justice by presenting his own merits before God, and who ever lives to

upon himself. The deeper his sense of guilt, the less can he be satisfied with mere pardon, and the more does he demand punishment, for by punishment he is JUSTIFIED. Whence do we derive his intimate persuasion of God's justice? Not from without; because men, as empirically guided, regard freedom from suffering as the highest good; it must therefore be implanted in our nature by God himself. The holiness of God, which reveals itself to the sinner by the connexion between suffering and transgression, has, therefore, a witness for itself in every human breast. Hence, on the one hand, the proclamation of pardon and reconciliation could not satisfy the conscience of the sinner, unless his guilt had been atoned for by punishment; and on the other hand, divine love could not offer its blessings to the sinner, unless holiness was revealed together with love. It was therefore necessary that suffering commensurate with the apostasy of man should be endured, which men would impute to themselves as their own. Such was the suffering, inward and outward, of the Redeemer. Two things were necessary, 1. That those sufferings should correspond to (entsprechen) the greatness of the sin of mankind; 2. That the sinner could rightfully impute them to himself."—THOLUCK, *Beilage ii.*, zum Hebraerbrieft, p. 104. There is more real and precious truth, according to our judgment, in that short paragraph, than in all Dr. Beman's book.



make intercession for him. Would this representation ever lead a human being to imagine that Christ merely makes pardon possible—that his death was a symbolical lesson to the universe? According to Dr. Beman's theory, Christ is not a priest. We are under no necessity of recognizing him as such, nor of committing ourselves into his hands, nor of relying on his merits and intercession. A mere possibility of salvation for all men is all that Christ has accomplished. But does this make him a High Priest in the scriptural and universally received sense of the term?

A third method by which the scriptures teach us the nature of the atonement, is by express declarations concerning the nature of his sufferings, or the immediate design of his death. It is expressly taught that his sufferings were penal, that he endured the penalty of the law, and that he thus suffered not for himself but for us. This is a point about which there is so much strange misconception, that it is necessary to explain the meaning of the terms here used. The sufferings of rational beings are either calamities, having no reference to sin, or chastisement designed for the improvement of the sufferer, or penal when designed for the satisfaction of justice. Now, what is meant by the language above used is, that the sufferings of Christ were not mere calamities; neither were they chastisements (in the sense just stated), nor were they simply exemplary, nor merely symbolical, designed to teach this or that truth, but that they were penal, i. e., designed to satisfy divine justice. This is the distinctive character assigned to them in scripture. Again: by the penalty of the law is meant that suffering which the law demands as a satisfaction to justice. It is not any specific kind or degree of suffering, for it varies both as to degree and kind, in every supposable case of its infliction. The sufferings of no two men that ever lived, are precisely alike, in this world or the next, unless their constitution, temperament, sins, feelings, and circumstances were precisely alike, which is absolutely incredible. The objection therefore started by Socinians, that Christ did not suffer the penalty of the law, because he did not suffer remorse, despair, or eternal banishment from God, was answered, by cotemporary theologians, by denying that those things entered essentially into the penalty of the law. That penalty is in scripture called death, which includes every kind of evil inflicted by divine justice in punishment of sin; and inasmuch as Christ suffered such evil, and to such a degree as fully satisfied divine justice, he suffered what the scriptures call the penalty of the law. It is not the nature, but the relation of sufferings to the law, which gives them their distinctive character. What degree of suffering the law demands, as it varies in every specific case, God only can determine. The sufferings of Christ were unutterably great; still with one voice, Papists, Lutherans, and Reformed, rebutted the objection of Socinus, that the transient sufferings of one man could not be equivalent to the sufferings due to the sins of men, by referring, not to the degree of the Saviour's anguish, as equal to the misery due to all for

whom he died, but to the infinite dignity of his person. It was the Lord of glory who was crucified. As the bodily sufferings of a man are referred to his whole person, so the scriptures refer the sufferings of Christ's human nature to his whole person. And he was a divine, and not a human person; but a divine person with a human nature. This is an awful subject, on which all irreverent speculation must be very offensive to God. Let it be enough to say with the scriptures that Christ suffered the penalty of the law in our stead, and that the penalty of the law was that kind and amount of suffering, which, from such a Person, was a full satisfaction to the divine justice. All that our standards say on this point, they say wisely, viz., that the Saviour endured the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, the accursed death of the cross, and continued under the power of death for a time. This was the penalty of the law; for the wrath of God, however expressed, constitutes that penalty, in its strictest and highest sense.

That the scriptures do teach that Christ's sufferings were penal, has already been proved from those passages in which he is said to bear our sins, that our iniquities were laid upon him, that he suffered the chastisement of our peace, and that as a sacrifice he endured the death which we had incurred. The same truth is expressed still more explicitly in Gal. iii. 13. The apostle thus argues. The law pronounces accursed all who do not obey every command; no man has ever rendered this perfect obedience, therefore all men are under the curse; but Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us. There can be no doubt what the apostle means, when he says, that all men are under the curse; nor when he says, cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the law to do them; neither can it be doubted what he means when he says, Christ was made a curse. The three expressions, under the curse, accursed, and made a curse, cannot mean essentially different things. If the former mean that we were exposed to the penalty, the latter must mean that Christ endured the penalty. He hath redeemed us from the curse by bearing it in our stead.\*

To the same effect the apostle speaks in Rom. viii. 3. What the law could not do (i. e., effect the justification of men) in that it was weak through the flesh, that God did, having sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, or as a sin-offering, he condemned, i. e., punished sin, in the flesh, i. e., in him, who was clothed in our nature. This passage agrees, as to the principal point, with the one cited from Galatians. The sentence which we had incur-

\* In this interpretation every modern commentator of whom we have any knowledge concurs, as for example, Koppe, Flatt, Winer, Usteri, Matthias, Rückert, De Wette. What the apostle adds in the next verse, "For it is written, cursed is every one that is hung upon a tree," is evidently intended to justify from scripture the use of the word *curse*. Those publicly exposed as suffering the sentence of the law, are called *cursed*; hence, since Christ, though perfectly holy, did bear the sentence of the law, the word may be properly applied to him.

red was carried into effect upon the Redeemer, in order that we might be delivered from the law under which we were justly condemned. In 2 Cor. v. 21, the apostle, in urging men to be reconciled to God, presents the nature and mode of the atonement, as the ground of his exhortation. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." The only sense in which Christ, who was free from all sin, could be made sin, was by having our sins laid upon him; and the only way in which our sins could be laid upon him, was by his so assuming our place as to endure, in our stead, the penalty we had incurred. "God made him to be sin," says De Wette, "in that he laid on him the punishment of sin." Here again we have precisely the same doctrine, taught under all the other forms of expression already considered. Christ was made sin, as we in him are made righteousness; we are justified, he was condemned; we are freed from the penalty, he endured it; he was treated as justice required the sinner to be treated; we are treated according to his merits and not our own deserts.

Fourthly, there are various other forms under which the scriptures set forth the nature of Christ's death, which the limits of a review forbid our considering. He has redeemed us; he has purchased us; he gave himself as a ransom, &c. It is readily admitted that all these terms are often used in a wide sense, to express the general idea of deliverance without reference to the mode by which that deliverance is effected. It cannot, however, be denied that they properly express deliverance by purchase, i. e., by the payment of what is considered equivalent to the person or thing redeemed. In the Bible it is not simply said that Christ has delivered us; nor is it said he delivered us by power, nor by teaching, but by his death, by his own precious blood, by giving himself, by being made a curse for us. Such representations cannot fail to convey the idea of a redemption in the proper sense of the term, and therefore teach the true nature of the atonement. We are redeemed; that which was given for us was of infinite value.

If the scriptures thus teach that Christ saves us by bearing our sins, or being made a sin-offering in our place, then the more general expressions, such as he died for us, he gave himself for us, we are saved by his death, his blood, his cross, and others of a similar kind, are all to be understood in accordance with those more explicit statements. To the pious reader of the New Testament, therefore, the precious truth that Christ died as our substitute, enduring in his own person the death which we had incurred, redeeming us from the curse by being made a curse for us, meets him upon almost every page, and confirms his confidence in the truth and exalts his estimate of its value, by this frequency of repetition and variety of statement.

Fifthly, there is still another consideration in proof of the unscriptural character of Dr. Beman's theory, which is too important to be overlooked. The apostle, in unfolding the plan of redemption



proceeds on the assumption that men are under a law or covenant which demands perfect obedience, and which threatens death in case of transgression. He then shows that no man, whether Jew or Gentile, can fulfil the conditions of that covenant, or so obey the law as to claim justification on the ground of his own righteousness. Still, as this law is perfectly righteous, it cannot be arbitrarily set aside. What then was to be done? What hope can there be for the salvation of sinners? The apostle answers by saying, that what the law could not do (that is, save men), God has accomplished by the mission of his Son. But how does the Son save us? This is the very question before us. It relates to the nature of the work of Christ, which Dr. Beman has undertaken to discuss. Paul's answer to that question is, that Christ saves us by being made under the law and fulfilling all its demands. He fulfilled all righteousness, he knew no sin, he was holy, harmless, and separate of sinners. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and thus endured the death which the law threatened against sin. He has thus redeemed us from the law; that is, we are no longer under obligation to satisfy, in our own person, its demands, in order to our justification. The perfect righteousness of Christ is offered as the ground of justification, and all who accept of that righteousness by faith, have it so imputed to them, that they can plead it as their own, and God has promised to accept it to their salvation. We can hardly persuade ourselves that any ordinary reader of the Bible can deny that this is a correct representation of the manner in which Paul preached the Gospel. It is the burden of all his writings, it is the Gospel itself as it lay in his mind, and as he presented it to others. It is the whole subject of the first eight chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, and of all the doctrinal part of his Epistle to the Galatians. In the former of these epistles, he shows that there are but two methods of justification, the one by our own righteousness, and the other by the righteousness of God. Having shown that no man has or can have an adequate righteousness of his own, he shows that the Gospel reveals the righteousness of God, that is, the righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ, and which is upon all them that believe. This righteousness is so complete, that God is just in justifying those who have the faith by which it is received and appropriated. He afterwards illustrates this great doctrine of imputed righteousness by a reference to the case of Adam, and shows that as on account of the offence of one man a sentence of condemnation passed on all men, so, on account of the righteousness of one man, the free gift of justification has come upon all. As by the disobedience of one the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one the many are made righteous. It is involved in all this, that we are no longer under the law, no longer subject to its demand of a perfect personal righteousness, but justified by a righteousness which satisfies its widest claims. Hence the apostle so frequently asserts, ye are not under the law, ye are free from the law. But

how? not by abrogating the law, or by dispensing with its righteous claims, but legally, as a woman is free from her husband, not by deserting him, not by repudiating his authority, but by his ceasing to have any claim to her, which continues only so long as he lives. So we are freed from the law by the body of Christ, i. e., by his death. He was made under the law that he might redeem them who were under the law; he hath redeemed us from its curse by being made a curse for us, he has taken away the handwriting which was against us, nailing it to the cross. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, because we are by this Gospel freed from the law and its condemnation. Hence Paul teaches that if righteousness (that is, what satisfies the demands of the law) could have come in any other way, Christ is dead in vain. How exclusively this righteousness of Christ was the ground of the apostle's personal confidence, is plain from his pregnant declaration to the Philippians, that he counted all things but dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him; not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

With this representation of the plan of salvation, Dr. Beman's theory is utterly irreconcilable. According to his theory, the demands of the law have not been satisfied. The relation of the sinner to the curse which this law pronounces against the transgressor, is legally—not evangelically—just the same that it was without an atonement. "The law has the same demand upon him, and utters the same denunciation of wrath against him. The law or justice, that is distributive justice, as expressed in the law, has received no satisfaction at all."—P. 133. What then has Christ's atonement done for us? He has simply opened the way for pardon. "All that the atonement has done for the sinner," says Dr. Beman, "is to place him within the reach of pardon."—P. 137. "The way is now open. Mercy can now operate. The door is open."—P. 106. The atonement "was required and made in order to open a consistent way for the publication of pardon, or for the exercise of grace to sinners."—P. 124.

This theory directly contradicts the apostle's doctrine; 1. Because he teaches that Christ was made under the law for the purpose of redeeming them that are under the law, and that he was made a curse for us. We are therefore delivered from the law, as a covenant of works, and are not subject to its demands and its curse when united to him. 2. Because it virtually denies that Christ wrought out any righteousness which is the ground of our justification. He merely makes pardon possible, whereas Paul says that by his obedience we are made righteous, that we become the righteousness of God in him. On this new theory, the language of the apostle, when he speaks of not having his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is unintelligible. 3. It destroys the very nature of justification, which is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our

sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed unto us and received by faith alone." But according to this theory there is no such thing as justification; we are merely pardoned. In scripture, however, and in all languages, the ideas of pardon and justification are distinct and in a measure opposite.\* If we are justified, we are declared righteous. That is, it is declared that, as concerns us, on some ground or for some reason, the law is satisfied; and that reason Paul says must either be our own righteousness, or the righteousness of Christ. Dr. Beman's theory admits of no such idea of justification. The sinner is merely forgiven, because the death of Christ prevents such forgiveness doing any harm. This is not what the Bible teaches when it speaks of our being made the righteousness of God in Christ; or of his imputing righteousness to us; or of our receiving the gift of righteousness. This is not what the convinced sinner needs, to whom, not mere pardon, but justification on the ground of a righteousness which, though not his own, is his, as wrought out for him and bestowed by the free gift of God, is necessary to peace with God.—Rom. v. 1.

4. It destroys the nature of justifying faith and deranges the whole plan of salvation. In accordance with the scriptures, faith in Jesus Christ is, in our standards, declared to be a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the Gospel. This is perfectly natural and intelligible, if Christ is our righteousness. If his work of obedience and death is the sole ground of justification before God, then we understand what the Bible means by believing upon Christ, putting our trust in him, being found in him; then the phrase, faith of Christ, which so often occurs as expressing the idea of a faith of which he is the object, has its appropriate meaning. Then too we understand what is meant by coming to Christ, receiving Christ, putting on Christ being in Christ. Upon Dr. Beman's theory, however, all this is well nigh unintelligible. We admit that a vague sense may be put on these expressions on any theory of the atonement, even that of the Socinians. If the death of Christ is necessary to salvation, either, as they say, by revealing the love of God, or as Dr. Beman says, by revealing his regard for law, then to believe in Christ, or to receive Christ, might be said to mean, to believe the truth that without the revelation made by his death, God would not forgive sin. But how far is this from being the full and natural import of the terms! Who would ever express mere acquiescence in the fact that Christ has made salvation possible, by saying, "I would be found in him not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ?" The fact is, the Socinian view is in some respects much easier reconciled with scripture than that of Dr. Beman. The passage just quoted, for

\* "The word *δικαιοῦν*," says De Wette, "means not merely negatively *to pardon*; but also affirmatively *to declare righteous*."



example, might have this meaning, viz., we must have, not the moral excellence which the law can give, but that inward righteousness of which faith in Christ is the source. This would have some plausibility, but what "the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ" can mean, as opposed to our own righteousness, on Dr. Beman's ground, it is hard to conceive.

Again: according to the Bible and the common doctrine of the church, when a sinner is convinced of his sin and misery, of his entire unworthiness in the sight of God, he is to be directed to renounce all dependence upon himself and to believe in Christ, that is, to place all his confidence in him. But if Christ has only made salvation possible, if he has merely brought the sinner within the reach of mercy, this is a most unnatural direction. What has the sinner to come to Christ for? Why should he be directed to receive or submit to the righteousness of God? Christ has nothing to do for him. He has made salvation possible, and his work is done; what the sinner has to do is to submit to God. The way is open, let him lay aside his rebellion, and begin to love and serve his Maker. Such are the directions, which this theory would lead its advocates to give to those who are convinced of their sin and danger. This is not a mere imagination; such are the directions, commonly and characteristically given by those who adopt Dr. Beman's view of the atonement. Christ disappears in a great measure from his own Gospel. You may take up volume after volume of their sermons, and you will find excellent discourses upon sin, obligation, moral government, regeneration, divine sovereignty, &c., but the cross is comparatively kept out of view. Christ has no immediate work in the sinner's salvation; and accordingly the common directions to those who ask, what they must do to be saved, are, submit to God, choose him and his service, or something of similar import. To such an extreme has this been carried, by some whose logical consistency has overcome the influence of scriptural language and traditionary instruction, that they have not hesitated to say that the command, Believe in Christ, is obsolete. It was the proper test of submission in the apostolic age, but in our day, when all men recognise Christ as the Messiah, it is altogether inappropriate. We doubt not that thousands who agree substantially with Dr. Beman, would be shocked at this language; nevertheless it is the legitimate consequence of his theory. If the atonement is a mere governmental display, a mere symbolical method of instruction, then the command to believe in Christ, to come to him, to trust in him and his righteousness, is not the language in which sinners should be addressed. It does not inform them of the specific thing which they must do in order to be saved. Christ has opened the door, their business is now immediately with God.

Again: can any reader of the Bible, can any Christian at least, doubt that union with Christ was to the apostles one of the most important and dearest of all the doctrines of the Gospel; a doc-

trine which lay at the root of all the other doctrines of redemption, the foundation of their hopes, the source of their spiritual life. But according to the theory that Christ's death is a mere symbolical method of instruction, an expression of a great truth, that it merely opens the way for mercy, what can union with Christ mean? In what sense are we in him? how are we his members? How is it that we die, that we live, that we are to rise from the dead in virtue of that union? What is meant by living by faith of which he is the object? The fact is, this theory changes the whole nature of the Gospel; everything is altered; the nature of faith, the nature of justification, the mode of access to God, our relation to Christ, the inward exercises of communion with him, so that the Christian feels disposed to say with Mary, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

We do not believe there is truth enough in this theory to sustain the life of religion in any man's heart. We have no idea that Dr. Beman, Dr. Cox, or any good man really lives by it. The truth, as it is practically embraced and appropriated by the soul under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is the truth in the form in which it is presented in the Bible, and not as expressed in abstract propositions. It is therefore very possible for a man to adopt theoretically such an abstract statement of a scriptural doctrine, as really denies its nature and destroys its power, and yet that same man may receive the truth for his own salvation as it is revealed in the Bible. We see daily instances of this in the case of Arminians, who professedly reject doctrines, which are really included in every prayer they utter. In like manner we believe that many who profess to adopt the theory, that the death of Christ merely opens the way for mercy, that it is only the symbolical expression of a moral truth, deny that theory in every act of faith they exercise in Jesus Christ. Still the theory is none the less false and dangerous. It has its effect, and just so far as it operates, it tends to destroy all true religion. Its tendency, especially in private Christians, is counteracted by reading the scriptures and by the teaching of the Spirit. But the evil of the constant inculcation of error and misrepresentation of truth, cannot easily be exaggerated. The particular error concerning the nature of the atonement inculcated in this book, has, we believe, done more to corrupt religion, and to promote Socinianism, than any other of the vaunted improvements of American theology, which, after all, are but feeble reproductions of the rejected errors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The doctrine of atonement for which we contend as the distinguishing and essential doctrine of the Gospel, is, 1. That sin for its own sake deserves the wrath and curse of God. 2. That God is just, immutably determined, from the excellence of his nature, to punish sin. 3. That out of his sovereign and infinite love, in order to redeem us from the law, that is, from its demands and curse, he sent his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, who in his own person

fulfilled those demands, and endured that curse in our stead. That his righteousness, or merit, thus wrought out, is imputed to every one that believes, to his justification before God. This is the doctrine of the church catholic, overlaid, corrupted and made of none effect, in the church of Rome; disembarrassed, reproduced, and exhibited as *the* doctrine of the Reformation; in manifold forms since opposed or rejected, but ever virtually embraced and trusted in by every sincere child of God.

What then are the objections to this great doctrine? The first objection urged by Dr. Beman is, that it involves "a transfer of moral character between Christ and those for whom he died. Christ could not be punished on legal principles, until he was guilty in the eye of the law; and his people could not be justified on legal principles, till its penalty was literally inflicted. This transfer of character, so as to render Jesus Christ the sinner, and the soul for whom he died, innocent, appears to us without foundation in reason and scripture." The objection then is, that the doctrine that Christ endured the punishment of our sins, and that we are justified by the imputation of his righteousness, involves such a transfer of moral character as to render Jesus Christ a sinner, and those for whom he died innocent. This objection is directed, not against this or that individual writer, but against whole bodies and classes of men, for Dr. Beman over and over asserts that there are but two views of the atonement, the one against which he brings this and other objections, and his own governmental theory. We have already shown that the former is the common doctrine of all the churches of the Reformation. It is against them, therefore, this objection is brought. Our first remark on it is, that it is the old, often repeated, and often refuted slander of Socinians and Papists, the latter corrupting and denying the doctrine of their own church. Our second remark is, that it is a gross, shocking, and, we are constrained in conscience to add, wicked misrepresentation. Dr. Beman betrays his want of faith in the truth of the accusation, though he makes it against hundreds and thousands of his brethren, by saying that a doctrine which represents Jesus Christ as a sinner, "appears to us without foundation in reason and scripture!" Shocking blasphemy *appears to us without foundation!* What man who believed what he said could utter such language? Is this the way in which a doctrine which represents the Son of God a sinner, is to be spoken of? No, Dr. Beman knew full well, that the doctrine he writes against, includes no such blasphemy. He cannot be so grossly ignorant as not to know that the distinction between the imputation and the infusion of sin and righteousness, is one for which the churches of the Reformation contended as for their life; and that the distinction is plain, intelligible, scriptural, and unavoidable—one which he and all other men do make, and must make. When the prophet says, "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," does Dr. Beman pretend to believe, that he means that the moral character of the father shall not be transferred to the son? that the sin of the one



shall not be infused into the other? Why then does he pretend to believe (for we hope it is mere pretence), that when we say, our sins were laid on Christ, we teach that our moral character was so transferred to him as to render him a sinner? Our third remark is, that the objection is glaringly unjust. We say, in the very language of scriptures, that Christ bore our sins. We tell in what sense we understand that language, viz., that it means, not that Christ was rendered in a moral character a sinner, which is blasphemy, but that he bore the punishment of our sins, which is the universally admitted meaning of the scriptural phrase. We say further, that by punishment we mean sufferings judicially inflicted as a satisfaction to justice. These things are so plain, they have been so often repeated, they so evidently do not involve the shocking doctrine charged on those who use this language, that we can have little respect for the man who can gravely and tamely repeat the charge, to the prejudice of the truth, and to the wounding of his brethren.

Dr. Beman's second objection is, that the system he opposes destroys "all mercy in God the Father, in the salvation of sinners, because it represents God as totally disinclined to the exercise of compassion, till every jot and tittle of the legal curse was inflicted. On the same principle, grace or pardon in the release of the sinner from future punishment would be out of the question; for what grace, or pardon, or favour, can there be in the discharge of a debtor whose demand (debt?) has been cancelled to the uttermost farthing?"—P. 122. This objection is the staple of his book. On page 100 he represents us as teaching that "the Son of God endured the exact amount of suffering due, on legal principles, to sinners." On page 107, he says, "The amount of Christ's sufferings must consequently be the same as the aggregate sufferings included in the eternal condemnation of all those who are saved by his merit. . . . The agonies which he suffered were equal to the endless misery of all those who will be saved by his interposition in their behalf." On page 146, he says, "If *one* soul were to be saved by the atonement, Christ must sustain an amount of suffering equal to that involved in the eternal condemnation of that one soul; and if a *thousand* were to be saved a thousand times that amount, and in the same proportion for any greater number who are to be rescued from perdition and exalted to glory. To this scheme there are insurmountable objections." True enough, but who hold that scheme? Dr. Beman attributes it to all who believe in the atonement, and do not adopt his scheme, for he says there are but two. This doctrine, that the sufferings of Christ amounted to the aggregate sufferings of those who are to be saved, that he endured just so much for so many, is not found in any confession of the Protestant churches, nor in the writings of any standard theologian, nor in the recognized authorities of any church of which we have any knowledge. The whole objection is a gross

and inexcusable misrepresentation.\* In a more moderate form it was brought forward by the Socinians, and repelled by the writers of that and subsequent ages. De Moor is generally recognised as the theologian of most authority among the churches of Holland, and Turretin is admitted to be one of the strictest of the Geneva school, and they both answer this calumny, by denying that, according to their doctrine, there is any necessity for the assumption that Christ's sufferings were equal to the sufferings of all his people. Thus Turretin, after quoting at length the objection from Socinus, answers it, 1. By showing that the scriptures teach that the one death of Christ was a satisfaction for all; that as by the one sin of Adam many were made sinners, so by the righteousness of Christ many are made righteous. 2. By insisting on the distinction between pecuniary and penal satisfaction. A piece of money in the hand of a king is of no more value than in the hands of a peasant, but the life of a king is of more value than that of a peasant, and one commander is often exchanged for many soldiers. 3. He says the adversaries forget that Christ is God, and therefore though his sufferings could not be infinite, as they were endured by his finite nature, they were of infinite value in virtue of the infinite dignity of his person. Sin, he says, is an infinite evil, because committed against an infinite God, through the act of a finite nature. So the sufferings of Christ, though endured in his human nature, are of infinite value from the dignity of his person.†

Dr. Beman, under this head, frequently objects that we degrade the atonement into a mere commercial transaction, a payment of a debt, which, from the nature of the case, excludes the idea of free remission. Our first remark on this objection is, that the scriptures use this same figure, and therefore it is right it should be used. When it is said, Christ purchased the church with his own blood, that we are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, such language means something. In every metaphor there is a point of comparison; the essential idea involved in the figure must be found in the subject to be illustrated. To purchase is to acquire, and to acquire by giving or doing something which secures a title to the thing acquired. When it is said that Christ purchased the church, it is certainly meant that he acquired it, that it is his, and that by his death he has secured a title to it, founded in the justice and promise of God. This does not make redemption a commercial transaction, nor imply that there are not essential points of diversity between acquiring by money and acquiring by blood. Hence our second remark is, that if Dr. Beman will take up any

\* There was a little anonymous work called *Gethsemane*, republished some years ago in this country, which taught this *quid pro quo* system of the atonement. But we do not know a single man, now of our church, who adopted the sentiments of that work.

† See the fourth vol. of his works, the treatise *De Satisfactione Christi*, p. 259. The same answer to the same objection may be seen in De Moor, vol. iii., p. 1030.

elementary work on theology, he will find the distinction between pecuniary and penal satisfaction clearly pointed out, and the satisfaction of Christ shown to be of the latter, and not of the former kind. 1. In the one, the demand is upon the thing due, in the other case it is upon the person of the criminal. Hence, 2. The creditor is bound to accept the payment of the debt, no matter when or by whom offered; whereas, in the case of a crime or sin, the sovereign is bound neither to provide a substitute nor to accept of one when offered. If he does either, it is a matter of grace. 3. Hence penal satisfaction does not *ipso facto* liberate; the acceptance is a matter of arrangement or covenant, and the terms of that covenant must depend on the will of the parties. Dr. Beman lapsed into an important truth, when he said, "Christ suffered by covenant."—P. 98. What that covenant is, we learn from scripture, and from the manner in which it is executed. The Bible teaches that, agreeably to that covenant, the merits of Christ do not avail to the benefit of his people immediately; his children remain under condemnation as well as others until they believe; and when they do believe they receive but the first fruits of their inheritance, they are but imperfectly sanctified, and are still subject to many evils, but being in a justified state their sufferings are chastisements and not punishments, that is, they are designed for their own improvement, and not to satisfy justice.

The satisfaction of Christ, therefore, being for sin and by suffering, is expressly and formally declared not to be of the nature of pecuniary satisfaction. The grace of the Gospel is thereby not obscured but rendered the more conspicuous. God is not rendered merciful by the atonement (as we be slanderously reported, as some affirm that we say), on the contrary, the atonement flows from his infinite love. Dr. Beman writes as a Tritheist, or as against Tritheists, when he speaks of the work of the Son rendering the Father gracious, and attributes that representation to us. The Lord our God is one God. It was his infinite love devised the plan of redemption, and it was so devised, that the exercise of love should be perfectly consistent with holiness, in order that God might be just in justifying sinners. Surely then our doctrine does not obscure the grace of the Gospel, at least as to the origin of the plan of mercy. But it is further objected that if Christ rendered a complete satisfaction to divine justice, then pardon becomes a matter of justice and not of grace. Justice to whom? certainly not to the ungodly, the unrighteous, the utterly undeserving, and hell-deserving sinner. If Christ suffered by covenant, and fulfilled all the conditions of that covenant, then he acquired a right to its promises. If he purchased his church he has a right to it. If it was promised that for his obedience to death, he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, then he, having done all that was required of him, has a right to the promised reward. But what right have we? None in the world; we are poor, and blind, and miserable, having nothing, meriting nothing, our only hope is



that we shall be treated, not according to our deserts, but according to the merits of another.

The objection sounds strange to our ears, coming from such a quarter, that we destroy the grace of the Gospel. What is salvation by grace, if it is not that God of his mere good pleasure provided redemption ; that he determines of his own will who shall be partakers of its benefits ; that those who are brought to repentance and faith, are not only justified avowedly on the ground of a righteousness which is not their own, but are made to feel and acknowledge as the very condition of their acceptance, their own ill-desert and misery ; and that they not only owe everything to Christ, but possess everything simply in virtue of their union with him, which union is kept up only by a self-renouncing, self-emptying faith ? The feeblest infant resting on its mother's bosom, a newborn lamb carried in the shepherd's arms, might with as much plausibility be suspected of doubting the love that sustains them, as the believer in Christ's having purchased the church with his own blood, of doubting the entire gratuitousness of his own salvation.

It would be easy to retort, and show that it is Dr. Beman's doctrine that destroys the grace of salvation. If Christ only makes pardon possible, if the possibility of forgiveness is all we owe to him, to whom or what do we owe heaven ? Is it to ourselves, as some of the advocates of his doctrine teach ? This is the natural answer. Christ having made pardon possible, then God deals with men according to their works. Whatever answer Dr. Beman himself would give to the above question, it must, from the nature of his system, be tame compared with the answer which flows from the doctrine that we owe the blessed Redeemer, not the possibility of pardon merely, but justification, adoption, sanctification, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. These things and all the blessedness they include or suppose, are not merely rendered possible, but actually secured and given for Christ's sake alone ; and hence the spirits of the just made perfect, whose robes have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, would drown in their thanksgiving to Him that has cleansed them from all sin, the whispered acknowledgments of those who have nothing for which to give thanks but the possibility of pardon.

These objections which Dr. Beman urges in various forms throughout his book are all old, and have been answered a hundred times. There is indeed one objection which is certainly American. It seems there was no economy in the atonement. It saved nothing, and gained nothing. The atonement, it is said, is "the grand device of heaven for preventing misery and promoting happiness."—P. 108. And it is triumphantly urged (through some eight pages), that if Christ suffered as much as the redeemed would have endured there is no gain of happiness. It is "a mere *quid-pro-quo* transaction."—P. 111. We have already shown that no church, or class of men, hold that the blessed Redeemer endured as much

suffering as the redeemed would have endured. It is a mere misrepresentation. But dismissing that point, the objection itself is unworthy of a being gifted with a moral sense. Would it be nothing that unnumbered millions are saved from sin and made perfect in holiness? Supposing there was no absolute gain as to the amount of misery prevented, that Christ had in a few years suffered all that finite beings through eternity could endure, still would the vast accession to the holy inhabitants of heaven be nothing? Does not the Bible say that he gave himself for his church, to purify and cleanse it? that the promotion of the holiness was the design of his death? Has it come to this, that the theory which makes happiness the end of the creation, must represent holiness as nothing, not worth giving thanks for, if gained at the least expense of happiness? This gross, epicurean view of the sublime and awful mystery of redemption, is a disgrace to the age and country that gave it birth.

We have thus endeavoured to show that the theory of atonement advocated by Dr. Beman is founded on the false assumption that the punishment of sin is for the prevention of crime, and not on account of its own intrinsic ill-desert; that it of necessity involves a denial of the justice of God, and makes mere happiness the end of creation; that it is destitute of any semblance or pretence of support from the scriptures; that it is just as arbitrary, and as much a philosophical speculation, as the Socinian theory; the latter asserting that the design of Christ's death was to display the love of God, and thus lead men to repentance, and the former, that it was intended to express his regard for his law, and thus act as a motive to obedience. We further endeavoured to prove that the theory is in direct conflict with the Bible. The scriptures teach, in every possible way, that as man was under a law or covenant which requires perfect obedience and threatens death in case of transgression, the Son of God was born of a woman and made under that law, fulfilling its conditions of perfect obedience and sustaining its curse for man's redemption; and that his righteousness is freely imputed to all those who receive and rest upon it by faith. In denying this doctrine, which is the common faith of Christendom, Dr. Beman's theory involves the denial of justification, reducing it to mere pardon; destroys the true doctrine of justifying faith; overlooks the union between Christ and his people; tends to banish Christ from view, and to vitiate the very source of all evangelical religion.

We showed that his objections to this doctrine, with one melancholy exception, were the oft repeated and oft refuted calumnies of Socinians; that the common doctrine does not involve the transfer of moral character or represent Christ as a sinner; that so far from obscuring the grace of the Gospel, or teaching that the atonement is the cause of the love of God, it represents it as flowing from that love, and presents in the clearest possible light the gratuitous nature of salvation. It is of grace that a Saviour was

provided ; of grace that the benefits of his death are conferred on one rather than another. And though we rejoice to know that he has acquired a right to his church, having bought it with his own blood, yet his people know, feel, and acknowledge that to them everything is of grace,—their vocation, justification, and final salvation. This is Christianity, a religion of which Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the author and the finisher, not the mere cause of the possibility of pardon.

Our discussion of the all-important question respecting the nature of the atonement has run out to so great a length that we cannot claim much room for the consideration of its extent. Dr. Beman writes on this whole subject, very much as a man might be expected to write against Calvinism, who got his views of that system from the furious harangues of itinerant Methodist preachers. He quotes no authorities, establishes no assertions, but coolly goes on attributing just what opinions come into his head to those against whom he writes. Had he taken up any one author, or class of authors, cited from their writings their own exhibitions of doctrine, and proceeded to examine them, his readers would know what credit to give to his statements. He however has preferred to state in general terms that there are but two views of the atonement, his own and another. That other he then most grievously misrepresents. He attributes to all who reject his doctrine opinions which not one in a million of them ever entertained. As far as relates to the nature of the atonement, these misrepresentations have already been pointed out. He commences and continues his discussion concerning its extent on the same plan. He assumes that the question relates to the limitation in the very nature of the work of Christ. "If," he says, "the atonement is to be considered as a literal payment of a debt, or, in other words, if it consisted in suffering the exact penalty of the law in the room of those who will be saved, it is manifest that it must be limited in its extent. In this case it would be a provision which must be regulated according to the principles of commutative justice. If *one* soul were to be saved, "then Christ must suffer so much, if a thousand, then a thousand times as much," &c.—P. 145. The opposite doctrine, which he adopts, necessarily leads to the conclusion "that an atonement sufficient for one, is sufficient for all;" of course those who reject his view, are made to hold an insufficient atonement.—P. 147. So Dr. Cox, in his introductory chapter, speaks of "the limitation of the nature" of the atonement, and represents those whom he opposes as holding that it is as "limited in its nature as in its application."—Pp. 16, 17. If these gentlemen would take the trouble to read a little on this subject they would find that this is all a mistake. They are merely beating the air. Those who deny that Christ died for Judas as much as for Paul, for the non-elect as much as for the elect, and who maintain that he died strictly and properly only for his own people, do not hold that there is any limitation in the nature of the atonement. They teach as



fully as any men, that "an atonement sufficient for one is sufficient for all." It is a simple question relating to the design, and not to the nature of Christ's work. That work, as far as we know or believe, would have been the same had God purposed to save but one soul or the souls of all mankind. We hold that the atonement as to its value is infinite, and as to its nature as much adapted to one man as to another, to all as to one. The whole question is, for what purpose did he die? What was the design which God intended to accomplish by his mission and death? That this is the true state of the question is obvious from the fact that the Reformed and Lutherans do not differ at all as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, though they do differ as to its design. Lutherans, as they deny the doctrine of election, deny that the satisfaction of Christ had special reference to the elect, though they are even more strict than the Reformed in their views of the vicarious nature of the atonement, i. e., of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his obedience to us. Accordingly, in all the early defences of Calvinists, their arguments on the necessity and on the truth or nature of the atonement, are directed against Socinians, and not against either Romanists or Lutherans. But when the question is discussed, "For whom did Christ die?" they address their arguments against the latter. Turretin, for example, in the statement of this question, says, "It is not a question concerning the value and sufficiency of Christ's death, whether it is not in itself sufficient for the salvation of all men. That is on both sides admitted. His death being of infinite value, would have been most amply sufficient for the redemption of all men, if God had seen fit to extend it to all. Hence the common distinction made by the fathers, and retained by many theologians, *Christ died sufficiently for all, efficaciously for the elect*, is perfectly true if understood of the worth of Christ's death, but not so accurate if understood of his purpose and design in dying. The question, therefore, properly relates to the purpose of the Father in giving his Son, and the intention of the Son in laying down his life. Did the Father destine his Son for all and every man, and did the Son deliver himself to death with the intention of substituting himself in the place of all and every one, in order to make satisfaction and procure salvation for them? Or, did Christ give himself for the elect alone, who were given to him by the Father, and whose head he was to be? The heart of the question, therefore, comes to this, not what is *the nature or efficacy* of the death of Christ, but what was the design of the Father in giving him up, and the intention of Christ in dying."\*

The simple statement of our doctrine, therefore, answers two thirds of Dr. Beman's objections against it. This is not a statement got up for the occasion, but made a century and a half before he was born. There is one view in which the question concerning the extent of the atonement is indeed intimately connected with

\* Turretin, vol. ii., p. 498.

its nature. If any man holds the doctrine that the atonement was nothing more than a symbolical expression of a truth, and "merely opened the door of mercy," there is of course an end to all question as to its design. If that be its nature, it can have no more reference to the saved than to the lost. And it is probably in order to get rid of all difficulty as to the extent of the atonement, that many have been led to adopt the above mentioned most unscriptural and dangerous view of its nature. But if the true doctrine concerning the nature of the satisfaction is retained, as it was by the Lutherans, and even in a great measure by the early Remonstrants, at least by Grotius, the question as to its extent resolves itself into a question concerning the purposes of God. It might seem as if this were an entirely useless question. The purposes of God are not the rule of our duty, and whatever God may design to do, we are to act in accordance with his preceptive will. Still there is a right and a wrong in every question, and what is wrong in relation to one point, must tend to produce erroneous views with regard to others.

Dr. Cox intimates with some truth that the difference of opinion on this point has its origin in, or at least implies a difference of view as to the order of the divine purposes.—P. 18. As in fact, however, there is no order of succession in the purposes of God, but simply in our mode of conceiving them, all his decrees being comprehended in one eternal purpose, any question about the order of those decrees must be a question relating to our own thoughts. Those thoughts, however, may be confused, contradictory, or lead to conclusions in conflict with revealed facts. Even this question, therefore, is not without its importance. If the purposes of God are all one, any mode of conceiving them which prevents their being reduced to unity; which supposes either a change or uncertainty in the divine plan, must be erroneous. As it is involved in our idea of God as the intelligent ruler of the universe, that he had a design in the creation and redemption of man, all classes of theologians form some theory (if that word may be used) of the plan adopted for the accomplishment of that design. According to one system, God purposed to create man, to permit the fall, to provide salvation for all, to give all sufficient grace, to elect to life those who improve this grace. This is the scheme of the Remonstrants, and of those generally who reject the doctrines of election and efficacious grace. According to another system, God purposed to create man, to permit the fall, to provide for the salvation of all; but, foreseeing that none would accept of that salvation, he chose some to everlasting life, and determined, by his effectual grace, to give them faith and repentance. This is the scheme proposed by Amyraud, Testard, Camero, and other French theologians of the seventeenth century. According to others, God purposed to create man, to permit the fall, to choose from the mass of fallen men an innumerable multitude as vessels of mercy, to send his Son for their redemption, and with him to give them everything necessary

for their salvation. This was the common doctrine of all the Reformed churches, from which the two former systems were departures. The common New School system, adopted in this country, lies between the Arminian and the French scheme, containing more truth than the former, and less than the latter.

The question, which of these views of the whole plan of God's dealings with men is the most correct, must be determined, 1. By ascertaining which is most consistent with itself; which best admits of being reduced to one simple purpose. It would not be difficult to show that the two former include contradictions, and involve the ascription of conflicting purposes to God. 2. By ascertaining which is most in harmony with the admitted character of God, as infinite, independent, and self-sufficient, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. 3. By ascertaining which is most consistent with revealed facts. The first, or Arminian scheme, breaks down entirely by coming in conflict with the clearly revealed truth of God's sovereignty in election, and of conversion by his mighty power, and not by an influence common to all men. Our present business, however, is with the two latter schemes, so far as they relate to the design of Christ's death. Was the Son of God sent into the world, as Dr. Beman says, merely to make the salvation of all men possible, or actually to save all whom God had given him?

Before attempting to answer this question, it is proper to remark that Dr. Beman and those who adopt his theory, seem constantly disposed to forget that SALVATION IS BY GRACE. If it is of grace, then it is a matter of grace that God provided salvation at all for guilty men. If this is not so, the gift of Christ, the influences of the Holy Spirit, and every other gift requisite for our salvation, are mere matters of justice, which it would have been unrighteous to withhold. No man can believe that, however, without contradicting every page of the Bible, and the testimony of every true Christian. 2. But if God was not bound to save any, he is at liberty to save whom he pleases. If he need not provide salvation for any, there could be no injustice in providing it for some and not for others. If salvation is of grace, it is of grace that one and not another is saved. And to complain that the mission of Christ was not designed to save all, or even that it did not open the door of mercy for all, if such were actually the case, would be to complain of the gratuitous nature of salvation. And, 3. If salvation is by grace, then those who are saved, are freely called, justified and glorified. The ground of their acceptance is not to be found in them, but in the good pleasure of God. This is the plain doctrine of the Bible, to which we must submit; and it is so clearly revealed, and so essential to the very nature of the Gospel, that those who are not willing to be saved by grace, cannot be saved at all.

There is therefore no preliminary presumption against the doctrine that the death of Christ had not an equal reference to all men, but had a special relation to his own people. The presumption is



all the other way. As the whole plan of salvation is, according to the apostle, arranged with a view "to show the exceeding riches of the grace of God, by his kindness towards us," that view of the economy of redemption, which renders the grace of God the most conspicuous, is the most in harmony with its grand design. What God's actual purpose was in the mission of his Son we can only learn from his own declarations. He reveals his designs to us partly by their execution, and partly by the annunciation of them in his word. What God does, is the clearest revelation of what he intended to do. Hence, if the satisfaction of Christ actually saves all men, it was certainly designed to save all men; but if it saves only a part of the human race, it was certainly designed only for a part. It cannot be questioned that Christ came to save men from their sins, and if we ask, Who he intended to save? we can get no better answer than by learning whom he does in fact save. If the end of Christ's mission was salvation, it is not conceivable that he died equally for all, unless he purposed to save all. Dr. Beman, however, denies that the design of his mission was salvation, it was merely to make salvation possible.

In assuming this ground, he is guilty of the same one-sidedness, the same contracted view, which he exhibits in his doctrine concerning the nature of the atonement. It is conceded that the work of Christ does lay the foundation for the offer of salvation to all men. Dr. Beman hence concludes that this was its only end; that it merely opens the way for the general offer of pardon. His theory is designed to account for one fact, and leaves all the other revealed facts out of view, and unexplained. The Bible teaches, however, a great deal more in relation to this subject, than that one fact. It teaches, 1. That Christ came in execution of a purpose; that he suffered, as Dr. Beman expresses it, by covenant, and ratified that covenant with his own blood. 2. That his mission was the result and expression of the highest conceivable love. 3. That it not merely removes obstacles out of the way, but actually secures the salvation of his people. 4. That it lays the foundation for a free, full, and unrestrained offer of salvation to all men. 5. That it renders just the condemnation of those who reject him as their Saviour; that rejection being righteously the special ground of their condemnation.

Dr. Beman's theory accords only with the last two facts just mentioned. It will account for the general offer of the Gospel, and for the condemnation of those who reject it, but it is inconsistent with all the other facts above stated, which are not less clearly revealed, and not less important. It overlooks, in the first place, the fact that Christ came into the world and accomplished the work of redemption, in execution of the covenant of grace. The use of such words as *covenant*, is often convenient, and sometimes unavoidable, as a concise method of expressing several related truths. Wherever there is a promise by one person to another, suspended upon the performance of a condition, there is a covenant. As,

therefore, the scriptures expressly speak of a promise made to the Son, suspended upon the condition of his incarnation, obedience, and death, they teach that there was a covenant of grace. The promise made to the Redeemer was, that he should see the travail of his soul; that he should have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; that those whom the Father had given him should come unto him; that they should all be taught of God, receive the Spirit, and be raised up the last day; that He should be the first-born among many brethren, and be highly exalted as the head of his people, and far above all principalities and powers. It is further expressly taught that he secured all these inestimable blessings by his obedience unto death. Because he thus humbled himself, God has highly exalted him; on account of the suffering of death, he was crowned with glory and honour; because he made his soul an offering for sin, therefore God hath divided to him his portion. If these things are so, if Christ had the attainment of these blessings, which involve the salvation of his people, in view in coming into the world; if the accomplishment of this work was the object of his mission, then it is a contradiction in terms, to say that, as far as the purpose of God and his own intention are concerned, he had not a special reference to his own people and to their salvation in his death. Their salvation was the reward promised, when it was said, "he shall see his seed," and it was for that recompense he died. Dr. Beman's theory denies all this. It assumes that his death, his whole work, had no reference to one class of men more than to another, to the saved more than to the lost. It simply made the pardon of all men possible. This is of course a denial of what Dr. Beman himself, in an unguarded hour, admitted, viz., that Christ suffered by covenant. What covenant? The scriptures make mention of no other covenant in connection with the Redeemer's death than that which included the promise of his people to him as a reward, and which was ratified in his blood. Here then is one plain, important, revealed fact, which Dr. Beman's theory overlooks and contradicts. If Christ in his death had regard to the recompense of reward, and if that reward included the holiness and salvation of his people, then, beyond contradiction, his satisfaction had a special reference to them.

In the second place, his theory contradicts the plainly revealed fact, that the mission and death of Christ are the expressions of the highest conceivable love. According to Dr. Beman, they are the expression of mere general benevolence. It is admitted that love was the motive which led to the gift of the Son of God. If that love was general benevolence to all men, then he died for all; if it was special love to his own people, then he died for them. That there is such special love in God, is involved in the doctrine of election. According to that doctrine, God, of his mere good pleasure, before the foundation of the world, chose some to everlasting life, and, for infinitely wise and holy reasons, left others to perish in their

sins. To say that the infinite love which led to the mission of Christ was a benevolence which had equal regard to these two classes, is to deny the doctrine of election. That doctrine, in its very nature, supposes a difference in the regard had for the vessels of mercy and the vessels of wrath; for those in whom God purposed to display the riches of his grace, and those on whom he designed to show his wrath, and make his power known. In teaching this doctrine, therefore, the scriptures teach, that besides the benevolence with which God regards all men, there is a higher, special, mysterious, unspeakable love, which he has to his own children; and to this love they refer the incarnation and death of the Son of God. The scriptures are too explicit and too full on this latter point to allow of its being questioned. Greater love, said Christ himself, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Paul prays that the Ephesians may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, to be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us. In this we perceive the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? In these and in various similar passages, it is distinctly asserted that the love which led to the gift of Christ was not general benevolence, consistent with the eternal reprobation of its objects, but the highest conceivable love, that would spare nothing to secure the salvation of those on whom it rested.

Again, it is with equal explicitness and frequency asserted, love to his people was the motive of the Son of God in laying down his life. "For their sakes," said the Redeemer, "I sanctify myself." "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." "I lay down my life for my sheep." "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." Do not these passages assert that love for his church, his friends, his sheep, was the motive of Christ in dying? When the scriptures divide men into classes, the sheep and the goats, the church and those who are not the church, and say that love to his sheep, love to his church, led the Saviour to lay down his life, they expressly assert that it was a peculiar love for them, and not a general benevolence including them and all others alike, that was the motive of Christ in laying down his life. Let it be remembered that this whole question relates, not to the incidental effects of Christ's death, but to his intention in dying. The passages above quoted, and the scriptures generally, do then teach that, besides his general benevolence for men, God has a special love for his own people, and that that special love, for his own, for his friends, for his sheep, led the Saviour to give himself up to death. If this is so, it overturns Dr. Beman's theory, which is in direct conflict with this plain and precious truth. It is not that be-



nevolence which consists with eternal reprobation, i. e., with the eternal purpose to leave men to suffer the just recompense of their sins, that led the Father to give up the Son, and the Son to assume our nature and die upon the cross. Those who admit this, admit all the limitation of the atonement for which we contend ; a limitation not as to its nature or value, but as to the purpose of God and intention of Christ. Besides, does it not involve a contradiction, to say that love to those whom God purposed, for wise reasons, not to save, was his motive in providing salvation ? Our Saviour teaches that the knowledge of the Gospel aggravates the guilt, and consequently the misery, of those who reject it ; then certainly, love to them was not the motive which led either to the adoption or the proclamation of the scheme of redemption. The fact is, this doctrine that Christ died as much for Judas as for Paul, is inconsistent with the doctrine of election ; and the two have never for any length of time been held together. Those theologians in the church of Rome, who remained faithful to the doctrine of election, also held that the death of Christ had special reference to his own people. The Lutherans, when they rejected the one doctrine, rejected also the other. So did the Arminians. A few French divines endeavoured, by reversing the natural order of the decrees, for a time to unite the two ; but the attempt failed. Both doctrines were soon rejected. The sovereignty of God, election, special love as the motive of redemption, and consequently a special reference to the elect, in the death of Christ, are joined together in the scriptures, and they cannot long be separated in the faith of God's people.

Another revealed fact which Dr. Beman's theory overlooks and contradicts, is, that Christ's death not only removes obstacles out of the way of the exercise of mercy, but actually secures the salvation of his people. It has been repeatedly shown that Dr. Beman constantly asserts that the only effect of the atonement is to bring the sinner within the reach of mercy, it merely makes pardon possible. This is the only effect claimed for it, and all that can be attributed to it on his theory. This, however, is in direct conflict with the scriptures, because they teach that the death of Christ renders the salvation of his own people certain. This follows from what has already been said. If Christ suffered by covenant ; if that covenant promised to him his people as his reward and inheritance, on condition of his obedience and death, then assuredly when he performed that condition the salvation of all whom the Father had given to him was rendered absolutely certain. Hence, it is said that he purchased his church, that is, acquired a right to it. He gave himself for his church, that he might purify and cleanse it. He came into the world to save his people from their sins. He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world ; or, as elsewhere said, to purify a peculiar people unto himself. These and similar declarations teach that the design of Christ's death was actually to save his people. They

are, therefore, so many direct contradictions of the doctrine, that he merely opened the door of mercy. To make salvation possible, is not to save ; to make holiness possible, is not to purify ; to open the door, is not to bring us near to God.

The scriptures also ascribe effects to the death of Christ, irreconcilable with the idea that it is a mere governmental display. We are justified by his blood, we thereby obtain remission of sins, we have peace with God, we are delivered from the wrath to come, and obtain eternal redemption. It is contrary to all scriptural usage to bring down all these and similar declarations to mean nothing more than that these blessings are rendered attainable by the work of Christ. This is not what the words mean. To say that we are justified, or reconciled, or cleansed, is not to say that the obstacles in the way of obtaining the blessings mentioned are merely removed. It is to say that his blood secures those blessings ; and secures them in the time and way that God has appointed. No instance can be produced in which a sacrifice, offered and accepted, is said to propitiate God and be the ground of pardon, when nothing more is meant than that the sacrifice renders pardon possible. The meaning uniformly is, that it secures and renders it certain. The very acceptance of it is the established way of promising forgiveness to those in whose behalf the sacrifice was offered. Dr. Beman's theory, therefore, in attributing so little to the death of Christ, contradicts the established meaning of scriptural phrases ; and is inconsistent with the clearly revealed fact that His death makes salvation not only possible, but certain.

It is further revealed that there is an intimate connection between the death of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was promised to Christ, to be given to his people. The apostle Peter says, He having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this, which ye both see and hear. Acts ii. 33. In Tit. iii. 5, 6, God is said to shed on us abundantly the Holy Ghost, through Jesus Christ our Lord. All spiritual blessings are said to be given to us in Christ Jesus, Ep. i. 3 ; that is, on account of our union with him, a union eternal in the purpose of God, and actual when we believe. This union existing in the divine purpose, this covenant union is represented as the ground of the gift of regeneration. In Ep. ii. 5, 6, we are said to be quickened with Christ, to be raised up in him. This can only mean that there is a union between Christ and his people, which secures to them that influence by which they are raised from spiritual death. If so, then in the covenant to ratify which Christ died, it was promised that the Holy Spirit should be given to his people, and to secure that promise was one design of his death. And consequently, all for whom he died must receive that Spirit, whose influences were secured by his death. He is, therefore, said to have redeemed us from the curse of the law, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, Gal. iii. 13, 14. It obviously contradicts this important truth, to teach that Christ's death had as much reference to one man as another,

or that it merely renders mercy possible. If Christ suffered by covenant, and if that covenant included the promise of the Holy Spirit, to teach, renew, and sanctify his people, then it cannot be denied that those thus taught, renewed, and sanctified, are those for whom he died.

Dr. Beman's theory, therefore, which denies that the death of Christ had a special reference to his own people, is inconsistent with the plainly revealed facts: 1. That he died in execution of a covenant in which his people were promised to him as his reward, to secure which reward is declared to be his specific and immediate design in laying down his life. 2. That the motive which led to the gift of the Son, and of the Son in dying, was not general benevolence, but the highest conceivable love, love for his sheep and for his friends. 3. That the design of his death was not simply to remove obstacles out of the way of mercy, but actually to secure the salvation of those given to him by the Father; and that it does in fact secure for them the gift of the Holy Ghost, and consequently justification and eternal life. In other words, God, having out of his mere good pleasure elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, was made under the law, satisfied by his obedience and death all its demands, and thus fulfilled the conditions of that covenant on which the salvation of his people was suspended, and thereby acquired a right to them as his stipulated reward. Such was the specific design and certain effect of his death. This is the plain doctrine of our standards, and, as we fully believe, of the word of God.

It will, however, doubtless be asked, admitting that our doctrine of the atonement does accord with the facts above mentioned, can it be reconciled with the no less certain facts that the Gospel is to be freely offered to all men, and that those who reject it are justly condemned for their unbelief? If it cannot, it must be defective. On this score, however, we feel no difficulty.

Our doctrine is, that the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to secure the salvation of his people, and with a specific view to that end, fulfilled the conditions of the law or covenant under which they and all mankind were placed. Those conditions were, perfect obedience and satisfaction to divine justice, by bearing the penalty threatened against sin. Christ's righteousness, therefore, consists in his obedience and death. That righteousness is precisely what the law demands of every sinner, in order to his justification before God. It is, therefore, in its nature adapted to all sinners who are under that law. Its nature is not altered by the fact that it was wrought out for a portion only of such sinners, or that it is secured to them by the covenant between the Father and the Son. What is necessary for the salvation of one man, is necessary for the salvation of another, and of all. The righteousness of Christ, there-



fore, consisting in the obedience and death demanded by the law under which all men are placed, is adapted to all men. It is also of infinite value, being the righteousness of the eternal Son of God, and therefore sufficient for all. On these two grounds, its adaptation to all and its sufficiency for all, rests the offer made in the Gospel to all. With this its design we have nothing to do; who are to be saved by it we do not know. It is of such a nature and value, that whosoever accepts of it shall be saved. If one of the non-elect should believe (though the hypothesis is on various accounts unreasonable), to him that righteousness would be imputed to his salvation. And if one of the elect should not believe, or having believed should apostatize, he would certainly perish. These suppositions are made simply to show that, according to our doctrine, the reason why any man perishes is not that there is no righteousness provided suitable and adequate to his case, or that it is not freely offered to all that hear the Gospel, but simply because he wilfully rejects the proffered salvation. Our doctrine, therefore, provides for the universal offer of the Gospel, and for the righteous condemnation of unbelievers, as thoroughly as Dr. Beman's. It opens the door for mercy, as far as legal obstructions are concerned, as fully as his; while it meets all the other revealed facts of the case. It is not a theory for one fact. It includes them all; the fact that Christ died by covenant for his own people, that love for his own sheep led him to lay down his life, that his death renders their salvation absolutely certain, that it opens the way for the offer of salvation to all men, and shows the justice of the condemnation of unbelief. NO MAN PERISHES FOR THE WANT OF AN ATONEMENT, is the doctrine of the Synod of Dort; it is also our doctrine.

Dr. Cox is pleased to call us "restrictionists." A most inappropriate designation. There is more saving truth in the parings of our doctrine than in his whole theory. Our doctrine contains all the modicum of truth there is in his, and it contains unspeakably more. His own theory is the most restricted, jejune, meager, and lifeless, that has ever been propounded. It provides but for one fact; it teaches a possible salvation, while it leaves out the very soul of the doctrine. It vitiates the essential nature of the atonement, makes it a mere governmental display, a symbolical method of instruction, in order to do what was better done without any such corruption. While we teach, that Christ, by really obeying the law, and really bearing its penalty in the place of his people, and according to the stipulations of the covenant of grace, secured the salvation of all whom the Father had given him, and at the same time throws open the door of mercy to all who choose to enter it; we retain the life-giving doctrine of Christ's union with his own people, his obeying and dying in their stead, of his bearing our sins, and of our becoming the righteousness of God in him; of the necessity of entire self-renunciation and of simple reliance on his righteousness, on the indwelling of his Spirit, and on his

strength for our salvation; while we impose no restriction on the glorious Gospel of the grace of God.

Long as this discussion has become, we have touched only what appeared to us the most important points of the controversy, and must leave others unnoticed. We trust we have said enough to show that there is no necessity for surrendering the common faith of Christendom, as to the nature of the atonement, for the miserable theory propounded by Dr. Beman. We cannot close this article without a single remark concerning his book itself. It is a small volume, sold at a moderate price, and intended for general circulation. It is written in a calm and confident spirit, but without force, discrimination, or learning. It is the very book to do harm. It presents its readers the choice between two doctrines; the one no man can adopt, the other is hardly worth accepting. So far as this book is concerned, the atonement must be rejected either as incredible or as worthless. He represents the one doctrine, as teaching that Christ became personally and morally a sinner, that he suffered just what in kind and degree all his people throughout eternity would have endured, and that they by his righteousness became morally innocent. This view of the atonement no man can believe and be a Christian. His own doctrine makes the atonement a mere symbolical method of instruction, and reduces the whole work of Christ in this matter to making pardon possible. This again is a doctrine which we see not how any man can practically believe and be a Christian. The book in itself is of little consequence. But from its gross and yet confident misrepresentation of the truth, it has more of the power due to falsehood than any book of the kind we know.

## ESSAY XV.

# SACERDOTAL ABSOLUTION.\*

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By absolution is meant the authoritative forgiveness of sins ; by sacerdotal absolution, the exercise of this official power by the Christian ministry, considered as a priesthood. The doctrine of sacerdotal absolution, therefore, comprehends two dogmas ; first, that Christian ministers are priests, and then, that as priests, they possess this power of forgiving sins. Now these two propositions are not only distinguishable, but distinct ; they do not involve each other ; the truth of the one does not necessarily imply the truth of the other. It is perfectly conceivable that the ministry might have the power claimed without being priests ; and on the other hand, that they might be priests without having the power. This will be seen more clearly in the sequel. For the present it will be sufficient to observe, that the two doctrines, though distinct, are near of kin and congenial, that they are commonly held by the same persons, that they are usually discussed together, and in particular that they are so discussed in the pamphlet now before us.

This publication has just come into our hands, and of its author we know nothing ; nor should we consider any notice of it needful or expedient, if we did not wish to make it the occasion of expressing our own views upon the subject,—a wish arising from our view of its importance, with respect not only to its comprehensive nature and its many points of contact with the entire system of opinion in relation to the church, but also to its practical bearing on the method of redemption, and the answer to the question, What shall I do to be saved ? To make Mr. Curtis's discourse the occasion for considering this subject, and to let his argument give shape and colour to our own, we are the more disposed, because it seems to be a fair and not discreditable exhibition of the high episcopalian doctrine now in vogue, and because it is a thing which can be handled without tongs or even gloves, being not ill-written nor devoid of talent, and as moderate in tone and temper as it is extravagant in its conclusions and assumptions. We shall, of course,

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not confine ourselves throughout to the reasonings and statements of this writer, but shall pay him the compliment of making his discourse the text and starting-point of ours, first presenting the subject as it appears in his pages, and then as it appears to us, beginning with his argument and ending with our own.

In executing the former part of this plan, we shall try first to ascertain distinctly what the preacher's doctrine is, and then show how he attempts to prove it and to repel objections. It will be necessary to state his doctrine negatively as well as positively, in justice to him, that he may not be supposed to hold opinions which he expressly disavows, and in justice to ourselves, that we may not be supposed to combat doctrines which we heartily believe.

We begin, then, by negatively stating that the absolution which the author claims is not a mere ecclesiastical absolution, having reference to ecclesiastical offences and ecclesiastical penalties, and affecting only the ecclesiastical relations of the subject, or his standing before the church; but an absolution having reference to sin in general, to the sinner's standing in the sight of God, his spiritual condition, and his ultimate salvation. Again: the absolution which the author argues for, is not a mere declarative absolution, setting forth the conditions on which God will forgive sin; nor a hypothetical absolution, declaring sin forgiven, on the supposition of the sinner's repentance; nor an optative or intercessory absolution, expressing a desire that his sins may be forgiven; but an authoritative, efficacious absolution, as effective of its purpose as if administered by the independent and supreme power, without any intermediate human agency. With respect to the "formal character of the act of absolution," the author does indeed adopt, or at least quote, a classification of the learned Bingham, which establishes the fourfold distinction of sacramental absolution, declaratory absolution, precatory absolution, and judicial absolution. It is clear, however, that the first and last of these, except so far as the outward form and circumstances are concerned, are one and the same thing, and that the other two are no absolution at all, according to the author's judgment, that is to say, no such absolution as would satisfy the conditions of his argument, or be considered by him worthy of the ministry. The whole drift of his reasoning is to show that an efficacious absolution, as described above, is a necessary function of the Christian ministry, not indeed in virtue of any intrinsic independent power, but of a special delegated power, just as real and effective as it could be if inherent or original.

In proof of this doctrine the author appeals briefly to tradition, and at more length to the scriptures. His traditional argument is drawn from the alleged fact, that the doctrine has been uniformly held by the Holy Catholic Church, and as a distinct fact, or included in the first, that the Reformers held it, and the first Reformed Churches; while, on the other hand, it has been rejected only by latitudinarians, who are bent on reducing the ministry to the lowest

point of inefficiency, and are utterly unable to agree as to the meaning of the scriptures on this subject.

Having, by this historical presumption, created a prejudice in favour of his doctrine, which we admit to be fair enough, so far as the alleged facts are substantiated, he adduces his argument from scripture, founded on the following three passages:

“Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”—John xx. 23.

“Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”—Matt. xviii. 18.

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”—Matt. xvi. 19.

With respect to the interpretation of these passages, it will only be necessary here to state, that the author denies the second and third to be exegetical of the first, and contends that it is exegetical of them. In other words, instead of arguing that because the figurative terms in Matthew *may* be descriptive of a mere ecclesiastical absolution, therefore the literal terms in John must be limited and understood accordingly, he argues that, because the passage in John contains a literal grant of power to forgive sins, the metaphors in Matthew must be interpreted to signify the same thing. As to the metaphors themselves, he adopts the opinion of Calixtus, that the shutting and opening of heaven implied in the grant of the keys, and the binding and loosing expressly mentioned in both cases, have reference alike to the bondage of sin, and convey the same idea that is literally expressed in John, viz., the remission or non-remission of sin, in the uniform sense of that phrase in the New Testament, which could not be departed from without the risk of dangerous errors.

Besides this argument derived from the express declarations of our Saviour, there is another, upon which the author seems to lay great stress, drawn from the nature of the ministerial office. The argument, in its most general form, is this, that the ministry without this power is worthless, or at least without “special and positive value,” and productive only of “incidental benefit, such as might ensue from the sober action of any man whatever, and not of an appointed and certain efficacy.” To teach the truth, to preach Christ, to invite men to him, to administer the ordinances, to exercise discipline, to feed the sheep and lambs of Christ’s flock, seem to go for nothing with the author, unless accompanied by the power of life and death, salvation and perdition, to give dignity and efficacy to the office.

This view of the ministry is so remote from that contained in the New Testament, and so far from naturally springing out of the idea of a ministry, that it might well appear inexplicable, were it not clear that the author, in thus judging, has constantly before

him a standard of comparison afforded by another ministry,—that of the Old Testament, the Levitical priesthood. It is not only implied but expressed in his reasonings, that such a power of absolution as he claims is needed to put the Christian ministry upon a level with the Jewish. Hence his argument may be more specifically stated in this form, that the Christian ministry is a priesthood, and must therefore have this power, without which it cannot be a priesthood, nor compete in point of dignity and efficacy with that of the Mosaic law. The premises in this ratiocination are invariably assumed as too unquestionable to require or admit of proof. Combining this argument, founded on the nature of the ministerial office, with that derived from the express declarations of the scripture, we may thus reduce them to a single proposition: the scriptures (in the passages already quoted) recognise the power of efficacious absolution as a sacerdotal function of the Christian ministry.

Having thus established his main doctrine by an appeal both to tradition and to scripture, and in the latter both directly from express declarations, and indirectly from the nature of the ministerial office, he proceeds to consider the objections which may be alleged against the doctrine. Of these he enumerates three, which he is pleased to call “popular objections.” The first is, that the doctrine is unscriptural; the second, that it is dishonouring to God, as an encroachment upon his prerogative; the third, that it is practically incompatible with human fallibility and weakness.

The first objection he disposes of by saying that it cannot be discussed apart from the other two; such is their mutual dependence that they must stand or fall together; if the doctrine is scriptural, it cannot be either unworthy of God or impossible to man; if, on the other hand, either of these allegations is well founded, it cannot be scriptural. It is no doubt true that the inconsistency of this opinion of the word of God cannot be urged as a specific objection against it, simply because it involves the whole matter in dispute, and either includes all other objections, or renders them unnecessary. To say that it is contrary to scripture is to say that it is false, which cannot of course be urged as a separate argument to prove it false. It was not, however, altogether fair in Mr. Curtis to present this as a sample of the objections urged against his doctrine, and of the ease with which he can dispose of them. We may let him try his hand upon some others by and by; but in the meantime we are willing to make this stipulation, that if the doctrine can be proved from scripture, the other two objections shall go for nothing, but if not, its interference with the divine prerogative and its incompatibility with human weakness, shall be held to aggravate its false pretensions and to give it a character of moral as well as intellectual obliquity.

The author's answer to the second and third of these “popular objections” is, that they are founded on a misconception of his doctrine, as asserting an original, inherent power, in the ministry,



whereas it asserts only a derivative and delegated power, or a special human agency and mediation, constituted by divine appointment, in accordance with the general analogy of God's dispensations, which the author illustrates by a great variety of scripture instances. Among these are the communication of the Holy Ghost to Joshua by the imposition of the hands of Moses; the necessity of circumcision and sacrifices under the Old Testament; the mission of Peter and John to "confirm" the Samaritan converts after Philip had baptized them; the washing away of Paul's sins by his baptism at the hands of Ananias; the cure of Naaman the Syrian by washing in the Jordan; the forgiveness of sins at the intercession of Abraham and Hezekiah; Christ's promise to be present whenever two or three of his apostles were assembled; and the promise of healing to the sick, as an effect of prayer and unction by the elders of the church.

These cases are adduced to prove not merely that God uses human agency in cases where he might dispense with it, but also that he thus employs a special "mediation," as the preacher calls it, where we should least expect it, and where reason can afford no explanation of it. This proposition there was no need of proving, since nobody disputes it. What the author ought to have established is not the general fact that God does specially appoint certain media or channels for the communication of his grace, but the specific fact, that the ministry is so appointed for the purpose of communicating pardon to sinners. He seems to have been conscious of his inability to do this, and has consequently confused the subject by recurring to Bingham's fourfold division, and arranging the scriptural examples just referred to, under those heads; a course which answers very well until he comes to judicial absolution, where, instead of citing even one case, he contents himself with telling what the power is, and asserting that it must be in the ministry, and showing its tremendous consequences. This we regard as a tacit but significant concession of the fact that there is no recorded instance of the actual exercise of the power which the author claims for Christian ministers.

We believe we have now noticed all the author's arguments, except those by which he undertakes to show that the power of remission granted by our Saviour was not an extraordinary or temporary one. These it will be sufficient to have named, as we have no intention to assume that ground of opposition to the doctrine. We may say, however, that to us the author's account of the miraculous powers of the first Christian ministers does not appear consistent with itself, since he sometimes speaks of them as being merely higher degrees of the same power which the ministry now exercises, and sometimes as so totally distinct that their coincidence was wholly fortuitous.

Having seen how triumphantly the author disposes of the "popular objections" to his doctrine, we are sorry to be under the necessity of bringing forward a few others which he has overlooked,

either because he never heard of them, or because he regarded them as too unpopular. In doing this we waive entirely the three objections which he has discussed, until the others are disposed of, and agree that if the latter are untenable the former may be thrown away, provided always, that in case of a contrary result, our argument shall have the benefit of these subsidiary reasons to corroborate and perfect it.

In order to preclude misapprehension, let us state again the doctrine which we understand the author to maintain, viz., that the scriptures recognise a power of authoritative efficacious absolution or forgiveness of sins, as an essential function of the Christian priesthood.

I. Our first objection to this doctrine is, that *the power contended for is not a sacerdotal power at all*. We prove it, first, by the scriptural definition of a priest, as one "ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin."—Heb. v. 1. This includes mediation and atonement, but not absolution or forgiveness. We prove it, next, from the Levitical practice. The Old Testament priests did not forgive sin, they simply made atonement for it. We prove it, thirdly, from the priesthood of Christ, who is nowhere represented as forgiving sin in his sacerdotal character. We prove it, lastly, from the nature of the case. The two functions of atonement and forgiveness are not only distinct, but, in a certain sense, incompatible. Christ himself acts as Lord when he forgives. Pardon is always an exercise of sovereignty, inherent or derivative. Upon these four reasons, drawn from the definition of a priest, the Levitical practice, the priesthood of Christ, and the very nature of the power claimed, we rest our first objection to the doctrine of "sacerdotal absolution," viz., that it is not a sacerdotal function.

II. Our second objection to the doctrine is, that *the Christian ministry is not a priesthood*.

1. They are not priests, first, because they are never so described in scripture, as they must have been if this were their true character, the rather as the writers of the New Testament had never known a religion, true or false, without a priesthood, were perfectly familiar with the names and functions of the Jewish hierarchy, and had the most exalted notions of the Christian ministry, as the most honourable office in the world, for which no man is sufficient, and of which no man is worthy. That the name should never be applied is wholly inexplicable on the supposition of a Christian priesthood. The solitary figurative phrase which is alleged in opposition to this statement,\* and in which the official title is not used, but only a derivative or cognate verb, can no more prove that Paul was a literal priest, than it can prove that the Gen-

\* "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering (ἰεροπποιῦντα) the Gospel of God, that the offering up (προσφορά) of the Gentiles might be acceptable," &c.—Rom. xv. 16.

tiles were a literal sacrifice, or that the parallel passages in Philippians and Timothy\* can prove that Paul was a literal libation.

2. They are not priests, secondly, because no priestly function is ascribed to them. The essential functions of a priesthood, as appears from the inspired definition above quoted, from the Levitical practice, and from the analogy of Christ's sacerdotal office, are mediation and atonement; exclusive mediation between parties who are otherwise mutually inaccessible, and real atonement by the presentation of an expiatory sacrifice. Such mediation and such atonement the New Testament never ascribes to Christian ministers. To assert that the essential function of a priesthood is "ministerial intervention for the pardon of sin," is either saying nothing that is definite and to the purpose, or saying too much, to wit, that women and laymen who baptize for the remission of sins, and all who teach men how to obtain pardon, are, by reason of this ministerial intervention, *ipso facto* priests; or it is saying in ambiguous and doubtful terms what we have just said plainly, to wit, that the very idea of a priest involves that of exclusive and necessary mediation, a kind of "ministerial intervention" of which the New Testament knows nothing.

3. They are not priests, thirdly, because the scriptures represent Christ as the only priest of his people, who by the one offering up of himself has perfectly and for ever answered all the ends of the old priesthood. Having then such a High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, we may come with boldness to the throne of grace. And he not only has performed the work of a priest, but he is ever present in that character. There were many priests of old, because they could not continue by reason of death; but Christ is a perpetual priest because he ever lives. They had successors because they were mortal men. He has no successor because he is partaker of an endless life. The apostle argues that if Christ were on earth he could not be a priest, that is, a priest of the old covenant, because the office was preoccupied by others, whose priesthood must either supersede his or be superseded by it. If, then, there could not be two priesthoods under the old covenant, neither can there be two priesthoods under the new. If his priesthood, then, was incompatible with that of others, that of others must now be incompatible with his. It follows, therefore, either that the Christian ministry is not a priesthood, or that Christ is not the great High Priest of our profession.

4. They are not priests *under* Christ, and in a sense compatible with his high-priesthood, as the priests of old were, because these were types of Christ, as a high priest yet to come and only partially revealed, whereas now the revelation is complete, and Christ is not only come but is still present; so that the supposition of a continued priesthood now, confounds the old with the new cove-

\* "Yea and if I be offered (σπένδομαι) upon the sacrifice and service of your faith." Phil. ii. 17. "For I am now ready to be offered (ἤδη σπένδομαι)."—2 Tim. iv. 6.



nant, the future with the past, and makes the type as necessary after as before the appearance of the antitype, which is absurd. It might as well be said that there must still be John the Baptists to be Christ's forerunners, or that the dawn of day can be continued after the rising of the sun. It is no reply, then, to the foregoing argument derived from Christ's exclusive priesthood, to allege that there can just as well be priests now as before his advent, since his advent is the very thing which has removed the necessity or rather destroyed the possibility of any priesthood but the highest. For the very reason that before Christ came there was a priesthood to prefigure him and represent him, it follows that there cannot be a priesthood now when there is nothing to prefigure, and when the object represented is, and for ever will be, personally present.

5. They are not priests, in the sense contended for, and as successors to the ancient priests, because the functions claimed for Christian ministers are wholly different from those of the Levitical priesthood, whose sacerdotal acts were not designed to secure the pardon of sin in the sight of God, it being impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, but had relation to the external theocracy, and were intended to secure the remission of its penalties, and the restoration of the offender to its privileges, so that they might have their full effect and yet leave the relation of the offerer to God entirely unchanged. The way in which these ends were answered was indeed designed to typify the method of atonement, but so was the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness, the slaying of the passover, and other rites which had not the nature of sin-offerings. If, then, Christian ministers are indeed the successors of the ancient priesthood, they should claim no more than the power to secure ecclesiastical remissions and advantages; whereas the advocates of this succession claim to do, not what the ancient priests did, but the very thing which Christ does, and are, therefore, at the same time, perverters of the priesthood of Aaron and usurpers of the priesthood of Christ.

6. They are not priests in the sense of human mediators specially appointed to bring men to Christ, as Christ brings men to God, because the scriptures, while they constantly and clearly teach that we must come to God through the mediation of Christ, teach no less constantly and clearly that we may come to Christ without any mediation at all. This distinction cannot be unmeaning or fortuitous, and is itself decisive of the question. The argument, however, is not merely negative but positive. Not only are the scriptures silent as to the necessity of any such "ministerial intervention," as a means of access to the benefits of Christ's death, but they hold forth the freedom of immediate access to the Saviour without any intervention, as one of the great distinctive doctrines of the Gospel. To cite the proofs of this position in detail, would be to quote all those scriptures in which Christ is represented as having died for the very purpose of bringing us to God, and as being the only mediator between

God and man. That another mediation is required to make this mediation available, is *à priori* so improbable, and so destructive of the very end for which the greater mediation is expressly said to be intended, namely, direct and free access to God, that it cannot be rendered even credible, much less proved true, by anything short of explicit declarations of the word of God, which are not only altogether wanting, but in place of which we have innumerable invitations and commands to come at once to Christ. In the face of all this to assert, as a point of Gospel doctrine, that no one comes to Christ but through his ministers, seems as extravagant as it would be to assert, as a fact of Gospel history, that Christ never wrought a miracle of healing until his followers had wrought one first. Alas, how many who have tried the effect of "ministerial intervention" for themselves or others, might say with the father of the lunatic, "I brought him to thy disciples and they could not cure him!" And the terms, if not the meaning, of our Lord's reproofing answer would be equally appropriate, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? BRING HIM HITHER TO ME." The parallel must not indeed be carried further; for the reason why the Christian priesthood cannot forgive sin is not the want of faith, but of authority and power. Let the illustration serve, however, to throw light upon the contrast between pardon as obtained by "ministerial intervention," and pardon as immediately bestowed by Christ. Unless the offers of the Gospel are entirely unmeaning, the Christian ministry is not, in this or any other sense, a priesthood.

7. They are not priests, finally, because the scriptures declare them to be something altogether different. The simple fact that they are not described as priests, would be sufficient of itself, even if no description had been given of their true official character; but the conclusion is immeasurably strengthened by the frequent and uniform representation of the ministry as messengers, heralds of salvation, teachers, watchmen, rulers, overseers, shepherds. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep." "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Feed my lambs." "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." "Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers, by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." "Let a man so account of us as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God (i. e., dispensers of divine truth)." "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Not only is all this no description of a priesthood; but that an office thus described, again and again, and in every variety of metaphorical and literal expression, should be after all a priesthood, is, if not impossible, beyond belief. And we are not surprised that most of those who hold the doctrine, found it not on scripture, but tradition, or, in other words, believe that Christian ministers are priests, because they say so.

On all these grounds, then, that the scriptures nowhere give the name of priest, or ascribe any sacerdotal function to the ministry; that Christ is represented as the one only priest of the new covenant, of whom the ancient priests were types, no longer needed or admissible; that the functions of these ancient priests were wholly different from those now exercised or claimed by Christian ministers; that any mediation between Christ and sinners is not only unknown, but directly contradictory to scripture; and that the ministry is there represented under characters the most remote from that of priests, if not wholly inconsistent with it; we are justified in urging, as a second objection to the doctrine of Sacerdotal Absolution, that the Christian ministry is not a priesthood.

III. Our third objection is, that the grant of the power of remission was not made to the ministry. We find the grant in the same three passages to which Mr. Curtis has appealed, and we agree with him in thinking that they all express the same idea under different forms. But we differ from him as to the persons to whom the grant of power is addressed. This is often a difficult question to determine in our Lord's addresses, as the word *disciples*, which is generally used, has both a narrower and a wider meaning, sometimes denoting all Christ's followers, and sometimes the apostles only, so that the objects of address can often be determined only by the context and the analogy of scripture. In the case before us, the parallel passages must of course be suffered to explain each other, not only in relation to the nature of the grant, but also to the persons upon whom it was bestowed. The one recorded in the sixteenth of Matthew, taken by itself, would seem to show that the power in question was conferred on Peter and his personal successors; but this conclusion is rejected equally by Mr. Curtis and ourselves, not only on the ground that such pre-eminence is nowhere else ascribed to Peter, and that no such peculiar power was ever claimed or exercised by him; but also on the ground that in the eighteenth of Matthew a like grant is made to the "disciples" generally. And that this does not mean the apostles merely, we infer from a comparison of John xx. 23 with Luke xxiv. 33, which shows that our Lord's words recorded in the former place, were addressed to "the eleven and them that were with them." This is our first reason for believing that the power of remission granted by our Saviour was not granted to the apostles or to ministers exclusively, but to disciples or believers generally.

2. A second reason for this same conclusion may be drawn from the connexion in which the words appealed to stand in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, which contains one continuous discourse, all the parts of which are intimately connected. Our Lord first teaches the necessity of conversion in order to enter the kingdom of heaven; then the sin of offending those who believe on him; then the method of dealing with offenders, first in private, then before two or three witnesses, and then before the church; which is followed directly by the assurance that their decisions would be



ratified in heaven, an assurance founded on the promise that where two or three are gathered together in the Saviour's name, he is in the midst of them. Peter then asked how often they were to forgive private and personal offences, to which Christ replies, that there can be no limit to the duty of forgiveness; and then shows by a parable the obligation resting upon those whom God had forgiven to forgive their brethren. Now, to make any one part of this conversation have respect to the apostles, while the rest relates to Christians generally, is altogether arbitrary, and may as easily be denied as affirmed. Unless the necessity of conversion, the duty of avoiding offences, and of private dealing with offenders, are all peculiar to the apostles, why should the promise of Christ's presence, and of ratification to the judgment passed, be limited to them? The command is to "tell it to the church," and the promise must be likewise to the church. That the formal exercise of the power granted is to be by officers, may be true enough; but this much is plain, that whatever power is here bestowed, is not bestowed upon the ministry, but on the church.

3. A third reason for denying that the power of remission is granted to the ministry exclusively, may be derived from the connexion which the scriptures recognise, and which all interpreters indeed admit, between this power and the gifts of the Holy Ghost. We learn from the New Testament that to every man was given the manifestation of the Spirit, to one the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another the gifts of healing, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discerning of spirits, to another the gift of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these wrought the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he would. The Spirit descended not only on apostles, not only on Jews, but on Gentiles, as when Peter preached in the house of Cornelius. Even the power to confer miraculous gifts was not peculiar to the apostles, as we learn from the case of Ananias, by whose agency such gifts were bestowed on Paul himself. Still less reason is there for assuming that the ordinary and abiding presence of the Holy Ghost is confined to the rulers of the church. They who claim it must either adduce a special promise, or show that a general promise is fulfilled in them alone, by proving their exclusive possession of those "fruits of the Spirit" by which alone the presence of the Spirit can be known. If the power of remission now in question is connected with the gift of the Spirit, and arises from his presence, then the power must belong to all those in whom the Spirit dwells, or in other words, it does not belong to the ministry, as such, but to the church at large.

4. The same thing may be argued from the practice of the apostolic age, so far as it is left on record. On the one hand, we find no case where a power of remission is said to have been exercised by the apostles, or by other ministers, *suo jure*. We never read of men confessing their sins to them and receiving absolution or

forgiveness at their hands. On the other hand, there are unambiguous traces of a power residing in the church collectively to judge its members and to try the spirits even of those who taught and governed it. These negative and positive considerations, though they may not be sufficient to establish a disputed fact, strongly corroborate the inference already drawn from the terms and context of the passages in which the power is granted, and from its connexion with the gift and promise of the Holy Spirit, that the power of remitting sins, whatever it may be, is not a peculiar function of the Christian ministry.

IV. Our fourth objection to the doctrine is, that the power of absolute effectual forgiveness is not bestowed at all. 1. The admitted fact, that pardon is an act of sovereignty, and that none can, in the strict sense of the word, forgive, except the person against whom the offence is committed, cannot, as we have already conceded, be alleged in opposition to an express delegation of the power, or a special designation of the ministry as the only medium through which it will be exercised. But does it not create a strong presumption against the fact of such delegation and appointment, and enhance the necessity of positive explicit proof, in order to establish it? In this sense only do we here adduce one of Mr. Curtis's three "popular objections," not to disprove his doctrine, but to show how indispensable, and yet how hard it is for him to prove it. And this presumption, far from being weakened, is corroborated by the analogies of other special agencies or mediations, which he cites, but which, as we have seen, including instances of every other "mediation" but the one in question, raise the presumption almost to a certainty, that this awful prerogative of the divine sovereignty, if not incommunicable in its nature, has at least never been communicated to mere creatures.

2. Even supposing that our Saviour's words apparently admitted of no other explanation than the one assumed in the adverse argument, the consideration just presented would require us to seek another sense before we acquiesced in one so much at variance with all our preconceptions of the nature of the pardoning power, and its relation to the sovereignty of God. In point of fact, however, this is not the only sense which our Lord's expressions naturally bear. It is only by insulating this one declaration that such an exposition of it seems to become necessary. That the power to remit sins *may* mean something less than the power absolutely and authoritatively to pardon them, is conceded by Mr. Curtis and "the learned Bingham," when they speak of declarative and precatory absolution as included in this grant. If a declaration of the terms of pardon, and if prayer for pardon, are a *part* of the meaning of "remission," there is no absurdity, although there may be error, in assuming these to be the *whole*. If our Saviour's declaration conveys to those whom he addressed the power of absolution, and if absolution means (as Bingham says it means) declarative and precatory absolution, and if we are satisfied with this sense, and refuse

to look for any other, how does Mr. Curtis convince us of our error? By adducing arguments from other quarters, from the nature of the ministry, the Jewish priesthood, and the analogy of God's dispensations; not by insisting that the words themselves can only mean authoritative efficacious absolution, which would be directly contradictory to what he says about the other and inferior kinds. What we allege is, not that the words *cannot* mean forgiveness in the highest sense, but that they *need* not be so understood, if any good cause can be shown for giving them another explanation.

3. It is plain from the connexion in which these words of Christ are found, that the power bestowed is twofold, that of authoritative teaching and that of authoritative judgment. By virtue of the former, the church was to act as a witness of the truth, that is, simply to proclaim the doctrines which she had received from Christ; by virtue of the latter, to apply these doctrines to the case of individuals, to bind and loose, to open and shut, to receive into the church and to exclude from it. In the discharge of both these functions she was to be under the control and guidance of the Holy Spirit, as well as regulated by the written word, so that nothing at variance with this standard should be received even upon her authority. This intimate connexion between the powers of teaching and of judgment, and the common dependence of both upon the Spirit and the word of God, make it the more improbable that the one was designed to be more authoritative or effectual than the other, and furnish a strong reason for believing that the power of remission which Christ gave to his disciples was power to declare the conditions on which God would pardon sin, and, in accordance with this declaration, to receive or exclude men from communion.

4. This conclusion is confirmed by the actual practice of the apostolic church. The sense in which Christ's words were understood by his disciples, is determined by the way in which they acted on them. If they believed themselves to be invested, either individually or collectively, with power absolutely to forgive sins, as the only appointed channels of communication between the souls of sinners and the mercy of God or the merits of Christ, we might expect to find them claiming this authority in words, or at least exerting it in act. Instead of this, we find them simply preaching the doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins. The constant burden of their preaching is, that faith in Christ is of itself sufficient to secure forgiveness, not at the hands of men, as "mediating agents," or in any other character, but at the hands of God, to whom the power and the act of pardon are always and immediately ascribed. That a power, which is now claimed as essential to the dignity and value of a ministry, as well as one expressly granted by the Saviour, should be thus omitted, both in word and deed, by those who first received it, or at least by the inspired historians of the acts of the apostles, is to us inexplicable, nay incredible, and added to the previous considerations, seems to show that Christ's words, in the passages appealed to, not only may but must



refer to something very different. On these grounds, therefore, we would rest our fourth objection to the doctrine of Sacerdotal Absolution, viz., that no such power as the one contended for has ever been conferred by Christ at all.

V. Our fifth objection to the doctrine is that, as a theory, it is part and parcel of a system of falsehood, from which it cannot be detached without gross inconsistency and arbitrary violence. Among the unscriptural and dangerous doctrines which it presupposes, or to which it leads, is the doctrine that the apostles were the original recipients of the Holy Ghost, whom they alone had the power to communicate by the imposition of hands; that they transmitted this power to their episcopal successors; that in every ordination by a bishop, sanctifying grace and supernatural power are imparted; that all who are thus ordained priests have power to make the sacraments effectual means of communicating the benefits of redemption, the power, as even Protestants express it, of making the body and blood of Christ; that in the eucharist the sacrifice of Christ is really repeated, or at least so commemorated as to secure the pardon of sin; that it is only by participation in the sacraments, thus administered, that men can be sanctified or saved. With the priestly power to forgive sins is connected, on the one hand, the necessity of specific confession, and on the other, the infallibility of the church; with that, the denial of the right of private judgment; and with that, the necessity of persecution. To one who goes the whole length of these errors, their connexion and agreement can but serve to strengthen his convictions: but to those who shrink from any of them, it ought to be a serious consideration, that they stand in the closest logical relation to the plausible and cherished dogma of Sacerdotal Absolution.

VI. Our sixth objection to the doctrine is, that it is practically a subversion of the Gospel, a substitution of human mediation for the mediation of Christ, and an exaltation of the priest into the place of God. It is easily said that the power arrogated by the clergy is derivative and delegated, that it is God who pardons, and Christ who makes the throne of grace accessible, just as it may be said and is said, that the Papist who adores an image uses it only as a help to his devotion while he worships God. The profession may in either case be honest, but in neither case can it avail to change the practical result, to wit, that God is neglected or forgotten in the idol or the priest. Instead of that dependence on the Spirit and the Word, which form an indispensable condition of Christ's promise to his people, the clergy are invested with authority, first, to decide what is scripture; then, to determine what the scripture means; and then, what is to be believed as matter of faith, though not contained in scripture; while at the same time they alone have power to forgive the sins of men. This practical restriction of the power to determine what is sin and to forgive sin, in the hands of a certain class of ministers, as such, without regard to their character and standing before God, is the sum, essence, and soul of

Antichrist ; the constituent principle of that very power which has debauched and enslaved the world ; of the power which sits in the temple of God, claiming to be God ; the mystery of iniquity, sustained by the working of Satan with all power, the power of the sword, the power of learning, the power of superstition, the power of an evil conscience, the power of lying wonders, a power which has held and will hold the world in subjection, till the Lord shall consume it with the Spirit of his mouth, and destroy it by the brightness of his coming. The Gospel thus preached is "another Gospel," and the doctrine, which tends to such a practical result, is and must be false.

To such of our readers as are satisfied by these or any other arguments, that forgiveness of sins is not a sacerdotal function, that the Christian ministry is not a priesthood, that the power of remission was not given to the ministry, that the power of absolute effectual remission was not given at all, that the contrary hypothesis is one link in a chain of fearful errors, and practically tends to the subversion of the Gospel, we may now say what we waived our right to say before, to wit, that the doctrine of Sacerdotal Absolution is unscriptural, dishonouring to God, and incompatible with human fallibility and weakness.

In the course of our argument, and at its close, the question naturally presents itself, what is the church to which the power of remission has been granted, how does it act, how can it be consulted, what relation has it to the Christian ministry ? These are inquiries of the highest moment, and the answer to them is really involved in the preceding argument ; but a direct and full solution is not necessary to the negative conclusions which we have endeavoured to establish, and may be better given in another place.

## ESSAY XVI.

# REGENERATION.\*

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VOLTAIRE, in one of his historical works, sneeringly inquires, "How were the priests employed while the Saracens were desolating the fairest portion of their church?" "Disputing," he answers, "whether Christ has one will or two!" It will be well, if the theologians of the nineteenth century do not furnish occasion to some future infidel historian for a similar taunting remark. There is scarcely any subject in the history of the church which is more humiliating than that of theological discussions of this nature. The evil appears to have arisen early, for Paul, in his Epistles to Timothy, repeatedly and earnestly exhorts him "not to strive about words to no profit," but to avoid "foolish questions which gender strifes." Yet not a century has passed from that day to this, which has not been disturbed and disgraced by disputes fairly within the apostle's description. That there are serious evils attending controversies of this character, no one will deny. They bring discredit on religion; they alienate brethren who should live together in love; they call off the attention from the practical duties of benevolence and piety; and they are, from their nature, destructive of the spirit of true religion. These disputes, in nine cases out of ten, turn, not on the correct exposition of the Bible, but on the decision of some point in mental or moral science. Philosophy, instead of being the handmaid of religion, has become the mistress of theology. This is a fact deeply to be lamented. The subjects, we admit, are so nearly allied that they cannot be kept entirely distinct; still, theology might have, and ought to have, much less of a philosophical, and more of an exegetical, character than it has commonly assumed. The predominance of the former over the latter element in theology, has been unquestionably one of the most prolific sources of evil to the church. What is Pelagianism, Arminianism, or almost any other *ism*, but a particular system of religious philosophy? And what are the questions

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which now alienate and divide Christians in this country, but questions in mental or moral science? If a man tells you his theory of virtue, you need ask no questions about his theology. Hence it is that these diversities of opinion are in a great measure confined to professed theologians, clergymen or laymen. The views which ordinary Christians, under the guidance of *common sense* and sanctified feeling, take of divine truth, are in all ages and countries very nearly the same. Nor does it seem to us correct to say, that common sense is nothing more than the popularized results of philosophical speculations, because we find it the same in countries where entirely different systems of philosophy have for ages prevailed. Look at Germany and England for an illustration. The philosophical theologians of these countries differ *toto coelo* in their views. They have hardly a single principle in common. But how is it with common Christians? They are as much united in opinion as they are in feeling. And why? Because their opinions are formed from the Bible, under the guidance of the Spirit, and the influence of those essential and consequently universal principles of our nature which it has been the grand result of philosophy to sophisticate and pervert. Is all philosophy then to be proscribed? By no means. The very statements we have made demonstrate its importance. If a man's speculative opinions do thus influence his views of religious truth and duty, it is a matter of unspeakable moment that these opinions should be correct. And, in a multitude of cases, the only means of preventing the evils which flow from erroneous principles is to show the fallacy of the principles themselves. Besides, all truth is harmonious, whether taught in the word of God or learned from the constitution of our own nature, and in itself there can be no subject more worthy of accurate knowledge than that mysterious and immortal principle which was created in the image of God. All this we cheerfully admit. At the same time the undeniable fact, that systems of philosophy have been as changeable as the wind; that each in its turn has been presented, urged and adopted with the utmost confidence; and each in its measure perverted the simple truths of the Bible, should teach us to be modest: it should teach us to separate the human from the divine element in our theology, and to be careful not to clothe the figments of our own minds with the awful authority of God, and denounce our brethren for not believing him when they do not agree with us. It should teach us, too, not to ascribe to men opinions which, according to our notions, may be inferred from the principles which they avow. This is an impropriety of very frequent occurrence, and of which we think we have great reason to complain in the sermon before us. To state what appears to us to be fair deductions from principles assumed, as arguments against them, is one thing; but to charge those who hold these principles with holding our deductions, is a very different affair.

With regard to the author of this sermon, we can truly say

that we entertain for him the highest respect. We love his honesty. We admire the frankness and decision with which he always avows his opinions. We rejoice to see that there is little of that evil spirit in the discourse which so often converts investigations of truth into angry disputations. But while we give Dr. Cox full credit for sincerity, and acquit him of entertaining any bad feelings towards his brethren, we still think that he is chargeable with grossly misrepresenting their opinions, and holding them up to a contempt and reprobation due only to his acknowledged caricature. We refer specially to page 6 of the Introduction, where, after stating that there are certain dogmas, "some of them not proved, or even suspected by those who employ them," which have a tendency "to solace the sinner in his distance from Christ," and "excuse his disobedience to the Gospel, and which ought to be rejected as false and ruinous," he gives the following specifications :

"A man has no ability to do his duty.

"Where the means of grace are purely and abundantly vouchsafed, by the sovereign goodness of Providence, a man can do nothing for, but can only counteract, his own salvation ; having no ability, even if he had the inclination, to believe the Gospel and be saved.

"The wickedness of men consists in physical defect or disorganization of the faculties of the soul, so that total depravity and physical depravity are nearly synonymous, and both equally true.

"Regeneration is the implantation of *a certain kind of* 'principle of holiness,' which is incapable of definition or demonstration, and has no connexion with human consciousness ; which precedes all active mental holiness, and is antecedent also to all 'the fruit of the Spirit,' as specified in the New Testament, in the susception and sustentation of which, the Creator is sole as well as sovereign agent ; man no agent at all, but only a passive receiver, an unconscious subject of the mysterious gratuity ; and which is the happy contrary of a *principle of sin*, which is conerated with us, and is the permanent fund of all our depravity, in which also we are passive—though quite active in exercising all the wickedness which flows (full copiously) from such an inserted fountain, and which has its residence and location somewhere in the texture of the soul, which is itself a very wicked thing somehow physiologically, in the very nature of it, antecedent to any agency at all of ours.

"Regeneration consists in some secret physical motion on the soul, which restores its dislocated powers, and cures the connatural diseases of its texture ; since the work of the Creator, as such, is not 'good,' but lays the foundation in the very entity of the soul for all its overt wickedness, and for the necessity of regeneration.

"The soul is passive, entirely passive, and God the sole agent of regeneration.

"The means of grace, and the Gospel itself, are in no sense moral causes of regeneration ; since their important use is merely to illustrate the strength of an invincible depravity, to make the sinner worse and worse, till he is physically regenerated, and then to signalize the prodigious efforts and labours of Omnipotence, in this department of constant miracle-working :—as if there were no considerable difference between dividing the Red Sea symbolically by the rod of Moses, and conciliating the human mind by the revealed glories of the *everlasting* Gospel !

"It is wrong to require a sinner in the name of God to repent immediately, and believe the Gospel, and to urge him to this as the only way of salvation.

"The offer of salvation is not made to every hearer ; or, if it be, to accept it is impracticable, and to require this of the sinner, wanton and absurd.

"If there is a universal offer in the Gospel, it is founded—not on the atonement of Jesus Christ at all, but only on the ministerial commission; or on human ignorance of who the elect are; or it has no moral foundation; or it is only man's offer, and not God's; or it is a matter of mere sovereignty, and so insoluble; or it is an offer in form, and in fact no offer or overture at all: and this, although there is no salvation known to the Gospel but that of our Lord Jesus Christ as an *aton*ing Saviour.—Prov. i. 20—33; Luke xiv. 24; Acts iv. 12, xiii. 26, 46."

The doctor then says, "if I have caricatured these dogmas, I have done so intentionally; but only by representing them as they are, and making the reality govern the appearance." It is not probable that Dr. Cox, in writing these paragraphs, had any one class of theologians exclusively in his eye; because some of "these dogmas" are inconsistent with each other. We have no doubt, however, that most of what is here stated, was intended as an exhibition of the doctrines of the old Calvinists (*sit venia verbo*). Our reason for thinking so is, that we are accustomed to see such, and even still more gross misrepresentations of these doctrines, though, we acknowledge, not often from such men as Dr. Cox. It is, however, notorious that this class of theologians are constantly represented as maintaining that "man has no ability, even if he had the inclination, to believe the Gospel and be saved,"—that man's depravity "is a physical defect"—that regeneration is "a physical change," &c. Representations have been made of these doctrines which we had supposed no man, who felt the obligation "of interpreting language in conformity with the known and declared nature of the thing described," could ever allow himself to make. Belonging as we do to the class, which for the sake of convenience and distinction we have called old Calvinists, we feel ourselves aggrieved by such representations, and called upon to show that no such doctrines can be fairly imputed to the elder Calvinists. It will not be expected that in a single article we should go over the formidable list presented by Dr. Cox. We shall, for the present at least, confine ourselves to the doctrine of this sermon, and show that the old standard Calvinistic authors expressly disclaim the opinions here imputed to them, and that they are not fairly deducible from any of the principles which they avow. Should we entirely fail as to the second point, it would still be very unjust to charge men with holding doctrines which they constantly disclaim, because we consider them as flowing from their principles.

The two main points of Dr. Cox's sermon are, first, that regeneration is a moral, in distinction from a physical change; and secondly, that it occurs in a manner perfectly accordant with the active powers of the soul. We use the word physical, not as synonymous with natural, but in the sense in which it is used in this sermon, implying something referring to the substance or essence. By physical regeneration in this sense, is intended a change in the essence or essential properties of the soul, or, in the language of Dr. Cox, an influence by which "the connatural diseases in the texture of the soul are healed." Our object is to show that Dr.



Cox has misrepresented the views of his brethren on this subject ; that they hold to no change in the substance of the soul nor in any of its essential properties, but uniformly teach that the change is a moral one, and takes place in a manner perfectly congruous to the nature of a rational and active being. We appeal to the language and doctrines of all the old Calvinistic divines, in support of this assertion.

Charnock, in his discourse on regeneration, contained in Vol. II. of the folio edition of his works, proposes in the first place to state in reference to the nature of this change, what it is not. On page 72, he says, "It is not a removal or taking away of the old substance or faculties of the soul. Some thought that the substance of Adam's soul was corrupted when he sinned, therefore suppose the substance of his soul to be altered when he is renewed. Sin took not away the essence but the rectitude ; the new creation therefore gives not a new faculty but a new quality." Who the "some" were, to whom Charnock refers as holding that the substance of Adam's soul was corrupted by the fall, we know not ; all we know is that such is not the doctrine of any respectable body of Calvinists, nor of any standard writer on the subject. The only man of whom we have heard who taught this doctrine, was Flaccius Illyricus, Professor at Jena, and a pupil of Luther ; but we know, too, that his opinions on this subject were condemned, almost without a dissenting voice, by the reformed theologians of Germany and England.

On the 73d page, Charnock says expressly, "the essence and faculties remain the same." "The passions and affections are the same as to the substance and nature of the acts ; but the difference lies in the objects." "When a man loves God, or fears God, or loves man, or fears man, it is the same act of love and the same act of fear ; there are the same motions of the soul, the same substantial acts simply considered," &c. "This new creation is not a destruction of the substance of the soul, but there is the same physical being, and the same faculties in all, and nothing is changed in its substance as it respects the nature of man."—P. 85. We have here a most explicit disavowal of the doctrine of physical regeneration in the sense in which Dr. Cox represents the old Calvinists as holding it.

As to the manner in which this work is effected, he remarks, in the first place, that "it is a secret work, and therefore difficult to explain." "Yet, secondly, this is evident, that it is rational, that is, congruous to the essential nature of man. God does not deal with us as beasts, or as creatures destitute of sense, but as creatures of an intelligent order. Who is there that believes in Christ, as heavy things fall to the earth, or as beasts run at the beck of their sensual appetites without rule or reason?"—P. 217. "God that requires of us a reasonable service, would work upon us by a reasonable operation. God therefore works by the way of a spiritual

illumination of the understanding, in propounding the creature's happiness by arguments and reasons; and in the way of a spiritual impression on the will, moving it sweetly to embrace that happiness, and the means to it which he doth propose; and indeed without this work preceding, the motion of the will could never be regular."—P. 218.

In speaking more particularly of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the will, his first proposition is, that there is such an influence; second, that "this work, though immediate, is not \*compulsive. It is a contradiction for the will to be moved unwillingly: any force upon it destroys its nature. It is not forced because it is according to reason, and the natural motion of the creature; the understanding proposing and the will embracing; the understanding going before with light, the will following after with love." "The will being a rational faculty cannot be wrought upon but rationally."—P. 221.

The instrumentality of the truth in regeneration is strongly asserted by all old Calvinists. Charnock says, "that to make an alteration in us according to our nature of understanding, will and affections, it is necessary there should be some declaration of things under those considerations of true, good and delightful, in the highest manner, to make a choice change in every faculty of the soul; and without this a man cannot be changed as a rational creature," &c.—P. 233. "The word operates, first, objectively, as it is a declaration of the will of God, and presenting the objects of all holy acts; and secondly it has an active force. It is operative in the hand of God for sanctification." "The Spirit doth so edge the word that it cuts to the quick, discerns the very thoughts, insinuates into the depths of the heart," &c.—P. 235. "To conclude, the promise in the word breeds principles in the heart suitable to itself; it shows God a father and raises up principles of love and reverence; it shows Christ a Mediator, and raises up faith and desire. Christ in the word conceives Christ in the heart, Christ in the word the beginning of grace, conceives Christ in the heart the hope of glory."—P. 236. The use of the word in regeneration is surely according to this view something more than "the rod of Moses stretched out over the Red Sea." We presume, however, that the paragraph in which Dr. Cox denounces the opinion that the means of grace have no tendency to produce holiness, was designed for a different quarter. Old Calvinists have generally been charged with laying too much stress on the use of means.

Charnock was by no means singular in the views here expressed. Living as he did in the days of the Puritan ascendancy in England, the companion of Owen, Goodwin, Burgess, Bates, and many others of the same class, he was united with them in opinion as well as in labours.

Owen, in his work on the Spirit, when speaking of regeneration, lays down the following proposition (page 270 of the folio edition).

"In whom or towards whomsoever the Holy Spirit puts forth his power, or the acts of his grace for their regeneration, it removes all obstacles, overcomes all opposition, and infallibly produces the effect intended." But how is this done? Is it by changing the substance of the soul or violating any of the laws of its being? The words which immediately follow, and which are intended to explain this general proposition, contain the answer. "The power which the Holy Spirit puts forth in our regeneration, is such in its actings or exercise, as our minds, wills and affections are suited to be wrought upon, and to be affected by, according to their natures and natural operations. He doth neither act in them any otherwise than they themselves are meet to be moved and to move, to be acted and to act, according to their own nature, power and ability. He draws us with the cords of a man, and the work itself is expressed by a persuading; 'God persuade Japhet; I will allure her into the wilderness and speak comfortably;' for, as it is certainly effectual, so it carries no more repugnancy to our faculties than a prevalent persuasion doth." One can hardly imagine how men who use such language can be charged with holding a "physical regeneration," by which "the connatural diseases of the texture of the soul" are cured. Owen proceeds to say, secondly, that the Holy Spirit "doth not in our regeneration possess the mind with any enthusiastical impressions; but he works in the minds of men on and by their own natural actings, through an immediate influence and impression of his power. 'Create in me a clean heart, O God.' He worketh to will and to do. Thirdly, he therefore offers no violence or compulsion to the will. This that faculty is not naturally capable to give admission unto. If it be compelled it is destroyed." And again on the next page, "the Holy Spirit, who in his power and operation is more intimate, as it were, unto the principles of our souls than they are to themselves, doth, with the preservation and in the exercise of the liberty of our wills, effectually work our regeneration and conversion unto God. This is the substance of what we have to plead for in this cause, and which declares the nature of this work of regeneration, as it is an inward spiritual work."

Bates's view of the manner in which this change is effected, is the same with that of Owen. In the fourth volume of his works (octavo edition), page 140, he says, "the effectual operation of grace does not violate the native freedom of the will, but is congruous to it. God's drawing is by teaching: 'every one who hath heard and learned of the father cometh unto me.' When the author of the Gospel is a teacher of it, the most stupid and obstinate sinners shall be convinced and obedient." Again: "God draws sinners to himself 'with the cords of a man,' in a rational way, without violence to their faculties, and fastens them by the bonds of love." In another place, Vol. II., page 298, he says, "the Holy Spirit does not work grace in us, as the sun forms gold in the earth, without any sense in ourselves of his operations: but we feel them in all our faculties



congruously to their nature, enlightening the mind, exciting the conscience, turning the will, and purifying the affections."

The opinions of the reformed, or Calvinistic divines of Germany and Holland, were the same on these points as those of the Calvinists of England. Turretin, *Theol. Elenct.* loc. 15, quæst. 4, § 15, says, "*Gratiæ efficacis motio non est simpliciter physica, quia agitur de facultate morali, quæ congruenter naturæ suæ moveri debet; nec simpliciter ethica, quasi Deus objective solum ageret et leni suasionem uteretur, quod pertendebant Pelagiani: sed supernaturalis est et divina, quæ transcendit omnia hæc genera.*" "*Potens est, ne sit frustranea; suavis est, ne sit coacta. Vis est summa et inexpugnabilis ut vincatur naturæ corruptio et summa bene agendi impotentia ac male agendi necessitas: sed amica tamen et grata, qualis naturam intelligentem et rationalem decet.*"

The Synod of Dort, in order to prevent any misapprehension of their views of efficacious grace, as though it were inconsistent in its operation with the rational and moral powers of our nature, say in reference to the fourth article in dispute between them and the Remonstrants, "*Sicuti vero per lapsum homo non desiit esse homo, intellectu et voluntate præditus, nec peccatum, quod universum genus humanum pervasit, naturam generis humani sustulit, sed depravavit et spiritualiter occidit: ita etiam hæc divina regenerationis gratia, non agit in hominibus tanquam truncis et stipitibus, nec voluntatem ejusque proprietates tollit, aut invitam violentem cogit, sed spiritualiter, sanat, corrigit, suaviter simul et potenter flectit: ut ubi antea plene dominabatur carnis rebellio et resistentia nunc regnare incipiat prompta ac sincera spiritus obedientia; in quo vera et spiritualis nostræ voluntatis libertas consistit.*"

Spanheim, in his *Elench. Controv. cum August. Confess. Theol. Oper.* tom. iii., col. 909, after stating how nearly the views of the Lutheran divines coincided with those of Calvinists on this subject, says that the difference which did exist seemed to result from a misapprehension of the Calvinistic doctrine. Supponunt precario, he says, 1. "*Nos velle per gratiam insuperabilem, motionem coactam, violentam, qualis trunci, lapidis, &c.* 2. *Negare nos resistibilitatem gratiæ respectu naturæ corruptæ, et carnis Deo inimicæ, qua sanè quantum in se est nimis resistit.*"

Stapfer, in his *Institut. Theol. Polem.*, cap. iii., § 136, maintains in unison with the common mode of speaking among Calvinists of his day, that there was in regeneration a divine illumination of the understanding, and a divine influence on the will. What he intended by these expressions he carefully explains. "*Per illuminationem autem intelligimus convictionem supernaturalem veritatum revelatarum, et nexus illarum distinctam repræsentationem.*" And this, he says, though certainly producing conviction, offers no more violence to the mind than the demonstration of a proposition in geometry. "*Neque magis (are his words), hominis libertati obesse potest, ac illi aliquid derogatur, si sole post tenebras redeunte objecta circumjacentia ipsi clare repræsentantur, aut si de veritate*

*geometrica per illius demonstrationem convincitur.*" With regard to the influence which operates on the will, he says, "*Pono ita agit, ut homo in determinatione sua liber maneat, neque obtorto quasi collo et invitus trahitur; facit ut homo volens agat. Veritatem tam clare mentibus ingerit, ut non possint non assentiri, et tanta motiva voluntati suggerit, ut non possit nolle, sed fertur: Pellexisti me Jehova, et pellectus sum, fortior fuisti me, et praevaluisti.*"—Jer. xx. 7.

This he asserts, over and over, is the true Calvinistic doctrine. This he does, not only in his chapters on Pelagianism and Arminianism, where he is answering precisely the same objection, which (and it is one of the wonders of the age) Calvinists are now urging against Calvinism, viz., that efficacious grace, as explained by them, is inconsistent with the nature of man as a rational and responsible creature; but also in his chapter *De Consensu et Dissensu Protestantium*, and in his preliminary statement of the general truths of theology.

We fear that we have already exhausted the patience of our readers, in proving a point concerning which every one acquainted with Calvinistic writers must have been satisfied before we began. We hope however that our labour will not be regarded as altogether unnecessary; because when an imputation comes from a source in every way so respectable, and in fact so highly respected, the inference will be, that in sober truth old Calvinists do hold, that the texture of the soul is diseased; that its substance is changed in regeneration; that some unknown violence to its faculties is suffered under the Spirit's influence. It is proper, therefore, that it should be shown, that the direct reverse of all this is distinctly declared by them to be their opinion; that they profess to believe regeneration to be a moral and not a physical change; and that it takes place without any violence being done to the soul or any of its laws. Our readers, too, will be led, we trust, to think with us, that there should be something more than mere inferential reasoning, to justify ascribing to men a set of opinions which they constantly and earnestly disclaim.

We are perfectly willing to admit that old Calvinists, when treating on the subject of regeneration, often speak of a direct and physical influence of the Spirit on the soul. But in what sense? In the sense in which Dr. Cox represents them as holding physical regeneration? Far from it. He says that physical regeneration and physical depravity stand together. He thus uses the word as qualifying the effect produced. They use it to qualify the influence exerted in producing the effect. But what do they mean when they speak of a physical influence being exerted on the soul in regeneration? They mean precisely what we suppose Dr. Cox means, when he speaks of "the agency of the Spirit, apart from the power of the truth, which is his instrument."—P. 27. They mean to assert that regeneration is not effected by mere moral suasion; that there is something more than the simple presentation of

truth and urging of motives. The idea of Calvinists uniformly was, that the truth, however clearly presented or forcibly urged, would never produce its full effect without a special influence of the Holy Spirit. This influence they maintained was supernatural, that is, above the mere moral power of the truth, and such as infallibly to secure the result, and yet, to use their own illustration, did the soul no more violence than demonstration does the intellect, or persuasion the heart. This opinion is not confined to any one class of Calvinists: as far as we know it is common to them all. We understand Dr. Cox as teaching the same doctrine. In fact we know no Calvinist who denies it. The author of the review, in the last number of the *Christian Spectator*, of the strictures of Dr. Tyler on some previous articles in that work, says, "We have never called in question the doctrine of an immediate or direct agency of the Spirit on the soul in regeneration." This is all the old Calvinists intended by physical influence. That this assertion is correct is evident from the fact that they taught, as we have seen above, that this influence is perfectly "congruous" to the nature of the soul, doing it no more violence than, in the language of Owen, "an effectual persuasion doth;" and that it produces no physical change in the substance of the soul or any of its faculties. Unless, therefore, we mean to interpret their language, not according to their clear and often repeated statements of their meaning, but according to the sense which a particular expression has attained among ourselves, we must admit that no part of the proof of the charge which we are considering can be made to rest on the occurrence of the phrase, "physical influence," in their writings. But there is still further evidence that our assertion on this subject is correct, which is derived from the fact, that it is in controversy with those who taught that there was no influence beyond "moral suasion" and "common grace" exerted in regeneration, that the older writers maintained what they sometimes called a physical influence of the Spirit.\*

Turretin, in the passage quoted above, describing the nature of the influence exerted in regeneration, says that it is not merely a moral influence, such as the Pelagians contended for, but supernatural and divine; and immediately adds, "*aliquid de ethico et physico participat*," where it is plain that it is in opposition to the Pelagian doctrine that he uses this expression; precisely as Dr. Cox would do the words, direct and immediate. When the Remonstrants arose, they objected strongly to the modes of expression which had become common among the Reformed theologians on the subject of efficacious grace. This led to a more precise statement of what their real doctrines were on this subject, and they uniformly repelled the imputations of their opponents that they

\* This expression, however, is by no means so common as that of "direct and immediate influence," and is so carefully guarded as to prevent any justifiable mistake as to its meaning.



taught that this influence was inconsistent with the rational nature of the soul. They very unwillingly used even the word irresistible, which they said was no word of their selection, but was put upon them by the Jesuits and Remonstrants. It afterwards indeed became very common; but they tell us they intended by it nothing more than certainly efficacious. Stapfer, cap. 17, p. 540, says, in answer to such objections, that when the Reformed speak of irresistible grace, "*hoc volunt, ita efficaciter divinam gratiam operari, ut hominis resistentiam infallibiliter superet, ut suasio ipsius tantae sit efficaciae ut homo non possit non velle summaque spontaneitate sequi.*" The necessity or certainty as to the result for which they contended, was none other than that for which President Edwards and all other Calvinists contend, and which is inconsistent with no other theory of liberty than that of indifference. If any man would candidly compare one passage with another in the writings of old Calvinists, and interpret their language agreeably to the fair rules of construction, there could be no doubt as to their meaning, by physical influence, what Dr. Cox, we presume, means by "an influence apart from the truth." Charnock, in speaking on this subject, says, in the general, that the work is secret, yet "congruous to the essential nature of the soul." He then states more particularly, first, that there is "an immediate and supernatural work on the will:" as synonymous with this expression he on the next page uses the words "physical operation." His second proposition is, that "this work, though immediate, is not compulsive and by force." "The will being a rational faculty cannot be wrought upon but rationally," is one of his assertions, in explanation of his idea of this immediate influence. "God, who knows how to make a will with a principle of freedom, knows how to work upon the will, without intrenching upon or altering the essential privilege he bestowed upon it," is another. His third position is, that this immediate work "is free and gentle." "A constraint, not by force, but love." "It is sweet and alluring: the Spirit of grace is called *the oil of gladness*; it is a ready and delightful motion which it causes in the will; it is a sweet efficacy, and an efficacious sweetness." Is this "to paralyze the soul, or to strike it through with a moral panic?" Surely Dr. Cox will regret having made such a representation of the views of men whose opinions as to *the nature* of divine influence do not differ one tittle from his own. "At what time," Charnock goes on to say, "God doth savingly work upon the will, to draw the soul from sin and the world to himself, it doth with the greatest willingness, freedom, and delight, follow after God, turn to him, close with him, and cleave to him, with all the heart, and with purpose never to depart from him—Cant. i. 4. *Draw me, and we will run after thee*: drawing signifies the efficacious power of grace; running signifies the delightful motion of grace: the will is drawn, as if it would not come; it comes, as if it were not drawn. His grace is so sweet and so strong, that he neither wrongs the liberty of his creature, nor doth prejudice his

absolute power. As God moves necessary causes, necessarily ; contingent causes, contingently ; so he moves free agents freely, without offering violence to their natures. The Spirit glides into the heart by sweet illapses of grace, and victoriously allures the soul.—Hos. ii. 14. *I will allure her, and speak to her heart ;* not by crossing, but changing the inclination, by the all conquering and alluring charms of love,” &c., 222. The fourth proposition is, that this influence is “insuperably victorious,” or, in other words, irresistible. In what sense is it irresistible ? Let the following explanation from Charnock in this immediate connexion answer, and prevent those brethren reproaching us for a word, who agree with us as to the thing intended. “As the demonstration of the Spirit is clear and undeniable, so the power of the Spirit is sweet and irresistible ; both are joined, 1 Cor. ii. 4. An inexpressible sweetness allures the soul, and an unconquerable power draws the soul ; there are clear demonstrations, charming persuasions, and invincible efficacy combined in the work. He leaves not the will in indifference. (This is what they were arguing against.) If God were the author of faith only by putting the will into indifference, though it be determined by its own proper liberty, why may not he also be said to be the author of unbelief, if by the same liberty of indifference it be determined to reject the Gospel ?” *“This irresistibleness takes not away the liberty of the will. Our Saviour’s obedience was free and voluntary, yet necessary and irresistible.”* “Is God not freely and voluntarily good, yet necessarily so ? He cannot be otherwise than good ; he will not be otherwise than good. So the will is irresistibly drawn, and yet doth freely come to its own happiness.” It is perfectly evident, therefore, that nothing more was intended by this expression than what President Edwards and all other Calvinists contend for, viz., moral or philosophical necessity. Now, when it is remembered that all the expressions which we have quoted, and much more of the same import, are used in explanation of the nature of that divine influence by which regeneration is effected, we think that our readers will feel that the strongest possible evidence should be required to sustain the charge against those who use them, of holding doctrines utterly inconsistent with their most clearly expressed opinions. We think that any candid man will acknowledge, who should take the trouble to read the writings of the older Calvinists, that they held no other doctrines on the subject of divine influence than such as are common among all classes of opposers of Arminianism. Their “supernatural” or “physical” influence meant nothing more than what is now intended by “a direct and immediate influence.” Owen, whose language on this subject is as strong as that of any writer with whom we are acquainted, states clearly, as we have already seen, his belief that the influence for which he contended is perfectly “congruous” to the nature of the soul. He tells us also, page 257, that it is against the Pelagian theory that he is arguing when he maintains that moral suasion alone does not effect our regeneration, but that

there is a direct agency of the Spirit in the work, which is such "as our minds, wills, and affections, are suited to be wrought upon and affected by, according to their natures and natural operations."

But if old Calvinists held such opinions (and they hold them still) on "the nature of regeneration and the mode of its occurrence," where is the difference between them and Dr. Cox? None in the world, as far as these general statements go. His general propositions, that regeneration is a moral, and not a physical change, and that it takes place in a manner accordant to the nature of the soul, are as orthodox as Owen or Charnock could wish them. We take it for granted, however, that Dr. Cox would think we had treated him rather unhandsomely thus to convict him of *old* orthodoxy. We proceed, therefore, to state where the difference really lies. It is simply this. All the old Calvinists, and the great majority, we hope and believe, of the new school also, hold that the *result* of the Holy Spirit's operation on the soul is a holy principle or disposition; Dr. Cox says, if we understand him, that the result is a holy act. This is the whole ground of debate, and to lookers on it may appear rather too narrow to be worth disputing about. Dr. Cox, however, seems to think that this is a subject of vital importance, affecting deeply our views of the whole system of divine truth, and our manner of preaching; involving the high questions of the grounds of man's accountability, the nature of sin and holiness, and of human liberty. And here we are sorry to say we agree with him. We are afraid that this is a turning point. We do not see how it is possible to hold together the tattered shreds of Calvinism, if this ground be assumed. Is Calvinism, then, a mere metaphysical system? We think not. But there are some metaphysical opinions utterly inconsistent with it; that indifference is necessary to the freedom of the will is one, and that morality consists in acts only, we fear, is another.

All the ground that we have for supposing that Dr. Cox holds this latter opinion, is found in the pamphlet under review. And even here it is not distinctly asserted; but it seems to be constantly implied, and to be the foundation of all that is peculiar in the sermon or introduction. The principle assumed is, that there is nothing in the soul but its substance, with its essential attributes, and its acts. Therefore, if regeneration be not a change in its acts, it must be a change in the substance. If sin be not an act, then it is substance, "an entity," "a disease of the texture of the soul." This, we take it, is the ground of the imputation that Calvinists believe in physical depravity and physical regeneration; for if this principle be not assumed, there is not even the slender and insufficient ground of these doctrines being deducible, in the author's opinion, from Calvinistic principles, to justify the charge. Besides, every one knows that this is the ground on which this charge has been made before, in a manner far more offensive and unfair than Dr. Cox is capable of making it. It is on this ground, also, we presume, that Dr. Cox maintains that the soul is as active in regenera-



tion, as in repentance or the exercise of faith. And it is on this ground, we suppose, that he ridicules the idea of regeneration being the production of a holy principle in the soul, "the happy contrary," as he calls it, "of a principle of sin, which is concreated with us." This view of the doctrine of regeneration (that it is the production of a holy principle), he says, can "command the confidence of no well disciplined mind" (rather a bold assertion by the way), and then adds, "By holy principle *I* mean love to God, and not anything antecedent to it; and by love to God, *I* mean loving him; and in that the subject is active."

Dr. Cox, we believe, pins his faith to no man's sleeve, and is the follower of no party. His opinions are his own; but what they are we pretend not to know, further than they are developed in this discourse. He has here brought forward the charge against many of his brethren, whom he loves, and who love him, of believing in physical depravity and physical regeneration. On what grounds he rests the charge we have no means of ascertaining, but from the opinions advanced in this discourse. We are anxious to show, that, as far as old Calvinists are concerned, the imputation is unfounded. And we think that we have shown, to the satisfaction of every candid reader, that these doctrines are constantly and explicitly disclaimed by this class of theologians. When it is asserted, therefore, in the face of such positive declarations to the contrary, that they do entertain these opinions, it can only be on the ground that they are fair inferences from the principles which they avow. This, though a very improper ground for a direct imputation, is all, we are persuaded, that can exist. How Dr. Cox would endeavour to make it appear that these are fair inferences we do not know, and therefore do not wish to be considered, in our further remarks on this subject, as having reference to Dr. Cox's theological opinions any further than they are distinctly avowed in this sermon. Our object is simply this: to endeavour to show that the Calvinistic doctrine, that regeneration consists in the production of a holy habit or principle in the soul, fitting and disposing it to holy acts, is not liable to the charge here advanced.

It will not be necessary to take up much time or space in proving that the doctrine of regeneration, as just stated, is that which is held by old Calvinists. Charnock, page 85, vol. ii., says, "This new creation consists in gracious qualities and habits which beautify and dispose the soul to act righteously and holily." Owen says the new creation is "an habitual holy principle wrought in us by God, and bearing his image," or, as in the next sentence, "a divine supernatural principle, of spiritual actions and operations,"

We prefer, however, referring to the statements of a few of the theologians of our own country, some of whom do not belong to the class which, for the sake of convenience, we have called old Calvinists. *President Edwards* not only admits that moral principles or habits may and must exist in the soul prior (in the order of nature) to moral action, but his whole system of practical theology,

as it seems to us, rests on this foundation. The great fundamental principle of his work on the affections is this:—All gracious or spiritual affections presuppose and arise from spiritual views of divine truth. These views the natural man neither has, nor can have, while he remains such. Hence arises the necessity of such a change being wrought in the state of the soul, that it can perceive the real beauty and excellence of divine things. This change consists in imparting to the soul what he calls “a new sense,” or a new taste, or relish, or principle, adapted to the perception and love of spiritual excellence. Were we to attempt to exhibit all the evidence which might be adduced in proof of the fact that his views were such as we have represented, we should be obliged to quote a great part of the work just mentioned. We refer the reader especially to what he says on the first and fourth signs of gracious affections. With regard to the nature of regeneration, we quote only a single passage. After having stated that the exercises of the true Christian are specifically different from those of unsanctified men, he infers that if the exercises are different, the principle whence they proceed must be different, or there must be, “as it were, a new spiritual sense, or a principle of new kind of perception or spiritual sensation.” And he hence explains why it is that “the work of the Spirit of God in regeneration is often, in scripture, compared to giving a new sense, giving eyes to see, and ears to hear, unstopping the ears of the deaf, and opening the eyes of them that were born blind, and turning them from darkness unto light.” The nature of this “new sense” he thus explains.

“This new sense, and the new dispositions that attend it, are no new *faculties*, but are new *principles* of nature. I use the word *principles*, for want of a word of a more determinate signification. By a *principle of nature*, in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular kind or manner of exercise of the faculties of the soul; or a natural habit, or foundation for action, giving a person ability and disposition to exert the faculties in exercises of such a certain kind; so that to exert the faculties in that kind of exercises, may be said to be his nature. So this new spiritual sense is not a new faculty of understanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of understanding. So that new holy disposition of the heart that attends this new sense, is not a new faculty of the will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of will. The Spirit of God, in all his operations on the minds of natural men, only moves, impresses, assists, improves, or some way acts upon natural principles, but gives no new spiritual principles.”\*

We have never met with a stronger or more formal statement

\* Treatise concerning Religious Affections, pp. 231, 232. Elizabethtown edition, 1757.

of the doctrine which we are endeavouring to support, than is found in this passage. And it should be considered that this is not a passing remark on the part of President Edwards, or the statement of an isolated opinion, but it is a fundamental principle of his whole theology, as we understand it. Take this away, and his whole theory of original righteousness, original sin, of the nature of holiness, and the nature of sin, and of the liberty of the will, go with it. Whether his views on these subjects are correct, although the main question, is one thing, but that he really entertained the opinion here so clearly expressed, we wonder that any man should ever have doubted. We trust that respect for the memory of President Edwards, and the obligation "to interpret language according to the known and declared nature of the thing described," will prevent any one saying, that he believed that "this new sense" is an entity, or "this foundation" for moral exercises is "something inserted in the soul," "an agent within an agent," &c., &c.

Dr. Bellamy seems to teach the same doctrines as President Edwards with regard to spiritual blindness, the necessity of divine illumination prior to the exercise of any holy affections, and the nature of regeneration. In the second volume of his works, page 502, he says, "In regeneration there is a new, divine, and holy taste begotten in the heart, by the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit." And on the opposite page, "The idea of a natural beauty supposes an internal sense, implanted by our Creator, by which the mind is capacitated to discern such kind of beauty." "And that the idea of spiritual beauty supposes an internal spiritual sense, communicated to the soul by the Spirit of God in the work of the new creation, is clearly illustrated and proved by a late divine, whose praise is in all the churches." He here refers his readers to Edwards on Religious Affections.

Dr. Dwight taught the same doctrine, and that clearly and definitely. In his discourse on the nature of regeneration,\* he says, "This change of heart consists in a relish for spiritual objects, communicated to it by the power of the Holy Ghost." That "this relish" was antecedent, according to his view, to all holy acts, there can be no doubt, because he expressly asserts it, and because his arguments go to prove it. What he calls "a relish for spiritual objects," he elsewhere calls a holy disposition, and refers to the case of Adam for an illustration of its nature. "When God created Adam," he remarks, "there was a period of his existence after he began to be, antecedent to that in which he exercised the first volition. Every man who believes the mind to be something besides ideas and exercises, and does not admit the doctrine of casualty, will acknowledge that in this period the mind of Adam was in such a state, that he was propense to the exercise of virtuous volitions rather than that of sinful ones. This state of mind

\* Works, vol. ii., p. 418.



has been commonly styled disposition, temper, inclination, heart, &c. In the scriptures it usually bears the last of these names. I shall take the liberty to call it disposition. This disposition in Adam was the cause whence his virtuous volitions proceeded; the reason why they were virtuous and not sinful. Of the metaphysical nature of this cause I am ignorant; but its existence is, in my view, certainly proved by its effects." Again, on the same page, "In regeneration, the very same thing is done by the Spirit of God for the soul, which was done for Adam by the same Divine Agent at his creation. The soul of Adam was created with a relish for spiritual objects. The soul of every man who becomes a Christian is renewed by the communication of the same relish. In Adam this disposition produced virtuous volitions. In every child of Adam, who becomes the subject of virtue, it produces the same effects." The same idea is expressed, if possible, even more formally in the same volume, page 451, where, among other things equally explicit, he says that by this disposition he intends "the cause, which in the mind of man produces all virtuous affections and volitions." The same doctrine is repeatedly taught in other passages of his works, as in the sermons on the Probation of Man, vol. i., 394, on the Fall, 410, 413, on Depravity as derived from Adam, &c.

From various passages which occur in the pamphlet of Dr. Tyler, already mentioned, we infer that he holds the same doctrine. The same principle (that moral disposition may exist antecedently to all moral acts) is also frequently and clearly asserted by Dr. Woods of Andover, in his controversy with Dr. Ware. We refer to the opinions of these distinguished men, to show how united Calvinists, old and new, are in their views on this point, and that if the charge of believing in physical depravity and physical regeneration be sustained, it lies on almost the whole Calvinistic world. Still the main question recurs—is the charge well founded?

The main principle, as before stated, which is assumed by those who make this charge is, that we can only regard the soul as to its substance on the one hand, and its actions on the other. If, therefore, there be any change wrought in the soul other than of its acts, it must be a physical change. And if any tendency, either to sin or holiness, exist prior to choice, it is a positive existence, a real entity. Thus the charge of physical depravity and physical regeneration is fairly made out. We are constrained to confess, that if the premises are correct, the conclusions, revolting as they are, and affecting, as they do, the fair names of so large a portion of the Christian church, are valid. The principle itself, however, we believe to be a gratuitous assumption. It is inconsistent with the common, and as we believe, correct idea of habits, both con-natural and acquired. The word habit (*habitus*) was used by the old writers precisely in the same sense as "principle" by President Edwards, as explained above, or disposition, as used and explained by President Dwight. That there are such habits or dispositions

which can be resolved neither into "essential attributes" nor "acts," we maintain to be the common judgment of mankind. Let us take for illustration an instance of an acquired habit of the lowest kind, the skill of an artist. He has a soul with the same essential attributes as other men; his body is composed of the same materials; and the same law regulates the obedience of his muscular actions to his mind. By constant practice he has acquired what is usually denominated skill; an ability to go through the processes of his art, with greater facility, exactness and success than ordinary men. Take this man while asleep or engaged in any indifferent occupation, you have a soul and body not differing in any of their essential attributes from those of other men. Still there is a difference. What is it? Must it be either "a real existence, an entity," an act or nothing? It cannot be "an entity," for it is acquired, and it will hardly be maintained that a man can acquire a new essential attribute. Neither is it an act, for the man has his skill when it is not exercised. Yet there is certainly "something," which is the ground of certainty, that when called to go through the peculiar business of his art, he will do it with an ease and rapidity impossible for common men. It is as impossible not to admit that this ground or reason exists, in order to account for the effect, as it is not to admit the existence of the soul to account for its exercises. By constant practice, a state of mind and body has been produced adapted to secure these results, and which accounts for their character. But this is the definition of principle or habit as given above. A single circumstance is here wanting which is found in other "habits," and that is, there is not the tendency or proneness to those particular acts to which this state of mind is adapted. This difference, however, arises not from any difference in the "habits" themselves, but from the nature of the faculties in which, so to speak, they inhere. A principle in the will (in its largest sense, including all the active powers), is not only a state of mind adapted to certain acts, but prone to produce them. This is not the case, at least to the same degree, with intellectual habits. Both classes, however, come within the definition given by President Edwards and Dr. Dwight,—“a state of mind,” or “foundation for any particular kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul.” The same remarks may be made with regard to habits of a more purely intellectual character. A man, by devoting himself to any particular pursuit, gradually acquires a facility in putting forth the mental exercises which it requires. This implies no change of essence in the soul; and it is not merely an act, which is the result of this practice. The result, whatever it is, is an attribute of the man under all circumstances, and not merely when engaged in the exercises whence the habit was acquired.

But to come nearer to the case in hand. We say a man has a malignant disposition, or an amiable disposition. What is to be

understood by these expressions? Is it merely that he often indulges malignant or amiable feelings? or is it not rather that there is an habitual proneness or tendency to their indulgence? Surely the latter. But, if so, the principle stated above, that we can regard the soul only as to its substance or its actions, cannot be correct. For the result of a repetition of acts of the same kind is an abiding tendency, which is itself neither an act (eminent or imminent) nor an "entity." Here, then, is the soul with its essential attributes—an habitual tendency to certain exercises, and the exercises themselves. The tendency is not an act, nor an active state of the feelings in question; for it would be a contradiction to say that a man whose heart was glowing with parental affection, or filled for the time with any other amiable feeling, had at the same moment the malignant feelings in an active state, although there might exist the greatest proneness to their exercise. We have seen no analysis of such dispositions which satisfies us that they can be reduced to acts. For it is essential to the nature of an act that it should be a matter of consciousness. This is true of those which are imminent acts of the will, or ultimate choices (by which a fixed state of the affections is meant to be expressed), as well as of all others. But a disposition or principle, as explained above, is not a matter of consciousness. A man may be aware that he has a certain disposition, as he is aware of the existence of his soul, from the consciousness of its acts, but the disposition itself is not a subject of direct consciousness. It exists when the man is asleep or in a swoon, and unconscious of anything. Neither can these habits be with any propriety called a choice, or permanent affection. For in many cases they are a mere proneness to acts which have their foundation in a constitutional principle of the mind. Our object at present is merely to show, that we must admit that there are mental habits which cannot be resolved either into essential attributes of the soul, fixed preferences, or subordinate acts; and consequently, that those who believe in dispositions, prior to all acts, do not necessarily maintain that such dispositions are of the essence of the soul itself. If it be within the compass of the divine power to produce in us that, which by constant exercise we can produce in ourselves, then a holy principle or habit may be the result of the Spirit's influence in regeneration, without any physical change having been wrought.

But it is not only objected, that regeneration is a physical change, if anything beyond a change in the exercises of the soul is effected; but it is said, that the thing contended for is utterly unintelligible, incapable of definition or explanation. We are ready to acknowledge that it admits of no other explanation than that which is derived from stating its effects, and referring to cases of an analogous kind. There is in all men a social principle, as it is called, which is something else than a desire to live in society, because it is connatural, as may be inferred from its universality; there is a tendency in all men to love their children, which is something besides loving them;



there is a tendency in man also to sympathize in the sufferings of others, &c. It may be said these are all constitutional tendencies implanted in our nature. This is very true; but does saying this enable us to understand their nature? May it not be objected to those who employ this language, You are using words without meaning; what do you know of a social principle distinct from the actual desire to live in society, or prior to its exercise? What idea can you form of a principle of self-love, excepting actually loving one's self? Are we then to deny that there are any such original propensities or tendencies as these implanted in our nature, because we cannot directly conceive of them? Yet Dr. Cox says, in reference to this subject, "By holy principle, I mean love to God, and by love to God I mean actually loving him." On the same principle, he might deny the existence of any of the original dispositions or tendencies of the soul. For they are as incapable of being defined, as the holy principle which is produced in regeneration. The soul itself is in the same predicament. We know nothing of it but from our consciousness of its acts. And if the objection which we are now considering be valid against the existence of principles prior to acts, then it is valid against the existence of the soul. We are conscious only of its exercises; and therefore some philosophers and theologians tell us, we are not authorized to go any further. The existence of a substance apart from the exercises is not necessary to account for their existence, and therefore is a gratuitous assumption. An assumption, too, of the being of something which we are incapable of defining, explaining, or even conceiving. The reply which Dr. Cox would make to this reasoning, is probably the same that we should be disposed to make to his objection against the existence of holy principles prior to holy acts. For the mind as instinctively seeks a reason for the choice which the soul makes in loving God, as it does for the various ideas and exercises of which it is constantly conscious. And we should probably be as little satisfied with the reasons which Dr. Cox could assign to account for this choice, as he would be with those of the defenders of the exercise scheme to account for these exercises without resorting to a thinking substance. If he were to say, that the effect is produced by the Holy Spirit, we should answer that this can only be done in one of three ways that we can conceive of. First, either by his direct agency producing the choice, in which case it would be no act of ours; or, secondly, by addressing such motives to our constitutional and natural principle of self-love as should induce us to make the choice, in which case there would be no morality in the act; or, thirdly, by producing such a relish for the divine character, that the soul as spontaneously and immediately embraces God as its portion, as it rejoices in the perception of beauty. The thing contended for is not more unintelligible than a hundred things of like nature. Taste is the ready perception and quick feeling of natural beauty. That is, these are its effects. But no one can directly

conceive of it, as it is an attribute of the mind, either original or acquired. It is absolutely certain, however, that the man who does thus readily perceive and feel the beauty of natural objects, has a quality of mind which a clown does not possess. And we should be astonished to hear any one maintain that there was no such thing as taste, but the exercise. "By taste I mean the love of beauty, and by love of beauty I mean actually loving it, and that is an act and not a principle." But why does one man see and feel a beauty in certain objects, when others do not? Is there no difference between the clown and the most refined votary in the arts, but in their acts? Is any man satisfied by being told that one loves them, and the other does not; that it is in vain to ask why; the fact is enough, and the fact is all; there is no difference in the state of their minds antecedent to their acts; there can be no such thing as a principle of taste, or sense of beauty, distinct from the actual love of beauty? We are disposed to think that no man can believe this: that the constitution of our nature forces us to admit, that if one man, under all circumstances, and at all times, manifests this quick sensibility to natural beauty, and another does not, there is some difference between the two besides their acts; that there is some reason why, when standing before the same picture, one is filled with pleasure, and the other is utterly insensible. We cannot help believing that one has taste (a quality, principle, or "inward sense") which the other does not possess. It matters not what it may be called. It is the ground or reason of the diversity of their exercises, which lies back of the exercises themselves, and must be assumed to account for the difference of their nature. Now, there is moral, as well as natural beauty, and it is no more unintelligible that there should be a "sense," or taste, for the one than for the other. The perfect character of God, when exhibited to different men, produces delight and desire in some, repugnance in others. We instinctively ask why? Why do some perceive and delight in his moral beauty, while others do not? The answer, some love, and others do not, is no answer at all. It is merely saying the same thing, in other words. There must be some reason why one perceives this kind of beauty, to which others are blind; why one is filled with love the moment it is presented, and the other with repugnance. And this reason must lie back of the mere exercise of this affection, must be something besides the act itself, and such as shall account for its nature.

It may be said, however, that the cases are not analogous: that the emotion excited by beauty is involuntary, while moral objects address themselves to the voluntary affections; and that it is admitted, that there is not only "something" back of each exercise of love, but we are told distinctly what it is, viz., the soul with its essential attributes, its ultimate or supreme choice, or dominant affection, and the object in view of the mind. Accordingly, it is easily accounted for, that when the character of God is presented, one man is filled with love, another with repugnance. The reason

of the difference in *these* acts does indeed lie back of the acts themselves ; for it is found in the ultimate or supreme choice of the different individuals. But how is this to be accounted for ? If there is no necessity for accounting for the particular character of the first or ultimate choice (if so it must needs be called), there is no need of accounting for the others. The difficulty is not at all met by this statement. It is only pushed back, from the secondary and subordinate, to the primary and dominant preference. There it returns. The question still is, why does the soul of one man make this supreme choice of God, or, in other words, love him, while another sets his affections on the world ? There is precisely the same necessity for assuming some ground or reason for the nature of the first choice, as for any acts subordinate and subsequent to it. Let us suppose two individuals called into existence, in the full maturity of their faculties ; each has a soul with the same constitutional powers, or essential attributes ; the one is filled with delight the moment the character of God is presented, and the other is not ; or the one loves his Maker as soon as the idea of his excellence is presented, the other does not. According to this theory, there is no reason for this difference. There is nothing back of the first act of choice that is not common to both. If instead of two individuals, we suppose two millions, one portion having their affections spontaneously called forth on their first view of their Maker, the other unaffected ; we have only a greater number of effects without a cause, but the case is the same. It will not do to answer, that the choice is made under the influence of the desire of happiness, for this being common to all, is no reason for the difference of the result, which is the very thing to be accounted for. To say that the choice is made under the influence of the desire of happiness, is only to say, that when the character of God is presented it gives pleasure. But the same character is presented in both cases, the same desire exists in both, yet in one it gives pleasure, is an object of desire ; in the other not. This is the fact which is left entirely unaccounted for on the theory in question, and for which the mind as instinctively seeks a question, as it does for any other effect. To account for the difference from the nature of agency, is to assume the liberty of indifference. For if the choice be made prior to the rising of desire towards the object, then it is made in indifference, and is of no moral character. If the desire rise, it is love ; which is the very thing to be accounted for. We are at a loss to see how this theory is to be reconciled with the Calvinists' doctrine on the will, which is not peculiar to Edwards, but constituted the great dividing line between Calvinists and Arminians from the beginning. We feel, therefore, a necessity for assuming that there is "something" back of the first moral act, besides the soul and its essential attributes, which will account for the nature of that act, which constitutes the reason why, in the case supposed, the soul of the one individual rose immediately to God, and the other did not ; and the "something"



assumed in this case is no more indefinite and undefineable, than the constitutional propensity to live in society, to love our children, or the mental quality called taste, all which are assumed from a necessity not more imperious than that which requires a holy principle to account for the delight experienced in view of the character of God. And if our Maker can endow us not only with the general susceptibility of love, but also with a specific disposition to love our children; if he can give us a discernment and susceptibility of natural beauty, he may give us a taste for spiritual loveliness. And if that taste, by reason of sin, is vitiated and perverted, he may restore it by the influences of his Spirit in Regeneration. Neither, therefore, the objection, that what is not an act, must be an essential attribute; nor the unintelligible nature of a "principle of nature," is, in our view, any valid objection to the common doctrine on regeneration.

There is a third objection, however, to this doctrine, and that is, that it renders the sinner excusable, because it makes regeneration to consist in something else than the sinner's own act. This objection, as it seems to us, can only be valid on one or the other of two grounds: the first is, that the common doctrine supposes sin to be a physical defect, and regeneration a physical change; and the second is, that a man is responsible solely for his acts, or that there can be no moral principle anterior to moral action. With regard to the first, it is enough to say, that no physical change, according to the constant declaration of Calvinistic writers, is held to take place in regeneration, and that no such change is implied in the production of a holy principle, as we have already endeavoured to show.

The second ground is inconsistent with the common notions of men on the nature of virtue, and, if true, would render the commencement of holiness or regeneration impossible. It is according to the universal feeling and judgment of men, that the moral character of an act depends upon the motive with which it is done. This is so obviously true that Reid and Stewart, and almost all other advocates of the liberty of indifference, readily admit it. And so do the advocates of the theory on which this objection is founded, with regard to all moral acts, excepting the first. All acts of choice, to be holy, must proceed from a holy motive, excepting the first holy choice which constitutes regeneration; that may be made from the mere desire of happiness or self-love. We confess that this strikes us as very much like a relinquishment of the whole system. For how is it conceivable that anything should be essential to the very nature of one act as holy, that is not necessary to another? Is not this saying that that on which the very nature of a thing depends may be absent, and yet the thing remain the same? Is it not saying that that which makes an act what it is, and gives it its character, may be wanting or altered, and yet the character of the act be unaffected? It is the motive which gives the moral character to the act. If the motive is good, the act is good; if the

motive is bad, the act is bad ; if the motive is indifferent, so is the act. The act has no character apart from the motive. This, it seems, is admitted with regard to all moral acts excepting the first. But the first act of a holy kind is an act of obedience, as well as all subsequent acts of the same kind. How then is it conceivable that the first act of obedience performed from the mere desire of happiness or self-love can be holy, when no other act of the same kind, and performed from the same motive, either is or can be ? How does its being first alter its very nature ? It is still nothing more than an act done for self-gratification, and cannot be a holy act. It is said we must admit this, from the necessity of the case, or acknowledge that there can be holiness before moral action. We prefer admitting the latter, and believing that "God created man upright," and not that he made himself so. That there was a disposition, or relish, or taste for holiness, before there was any holy act, which to us is far more reasonable than that an act is holy because the first of a series, which, if performed from the same motive at a different point of the line, would have a different character. The grand objection, we know, that is made to all this is, that holy beings have fallen, which it is maintained would be impossible if the ground here assumed is correct. If the character of an act depends on its motive, a sinful act cannot be performed by a being in whom sin does not already exist ; and, consequently, neither the fallen angels, nor Adam, could ever have apostatized. We think, however, that there is a broad difference between the commencement of holiness and the commencement of sin, and that more is necessary for the former than for the latter. An act of obedience, if it is performed under the mere impulse of self-love, is virtually no act of obedience. It is not performed with any intention to obey, for that is holy, and cannot, according to the theory, precede the act. But an act of disobedience performed from the desire of happiness is rebellion. The cases are surely widely different. If to please myself I do what God commands, it is not holiness ; but if to please myself I do what he forbids, it is sin. Besides, no creature is immutable. Though created holy, the taste for holy enjoyments may be overcome by a temptation sufficiently insidious and powerful, and a selfish motive or feeling excited in the mind. Neither is a sinful character immutable. By the power of the Holy Spirit the truth may be so clearly presented, and so effectually applied, as to produce that change which is called regeneration ; that is, as to call into existence a taste for holiness, so that it is chosen for its own sake, and not merely as a means of happiness.

It is evident, therefore, that the theory which denies the possibility of moral distinctions being carried back of acts of choice, forces its advocates to adopt the opinion that the first holy act is specifically different from all others. That Adam was not created holy, but by choosing God, made himself holy, and that this choice, though made with no holy motive or intention, but merely from a desire of happiness, has a moral character. This we think not only

contradictory to the express declaration of scripture, which says that man was created in the image of his Maker (which includes his moral as well as his natural image, as we are taught in the New Testament), but is inconsistent with the very first principles of morals, as it teaches that an act performed without any good intention or motive, is yet holy. It seems to us liable, also, to this further objection, that it represents man's obligation to love God, to rest upon the fact that it will promote his happiness. This is involved in the principle, that the choice made from this motive is a good choice; for it can only be good as it is in obedience to a moral obligation. If the obligation fulfilled is to God, then to fulfil it must be the motive. If the motive which prompts the choice have reference to himself, then the only obligation which he fulfils, is to himself. It is a wise decision, but it is no holy act. If it be said that the excellence of the choice lies in the nature of the object chosen, it is giving up the question. For if the excellence of the object be the ground of the choice, it can act as a motive only by exciting a desire for it as excellent, which must needs be a holy desire, and if this determines the choice, then the man is holy before he chooses God as his portion, and the choice is the result, and not the cause of his holiness. Or, if we call the desire itself the choice (which is an incorrect use of terms), still the case is the same. For the best definition that can be given of a holy being is, that holy objects excite in him desire as soon as they are presented. If Adam, therefore, was filled with desire and pleasure, as soon as his mind rested on the character of God, then he was created holy. As we remarked above, this theory, that the first moral act is not performed from a holy motive, but from the constitutional desire of happiness, is not only inconsistent with the nature of a holy act, but affords no relief in the case. For the difficulty still remains, why the character of God should appear desirable to one being, and not to another, if both are called into existence *in puris naturalibus*.

That Adam was created holy, that is, with a holy disposition, which existed prior to his first holy act, though necessarily destructive of the very first principle of the theory referred to, has been considered as a fixed point among Calvinists. We have already seen that Dr. Dwight did not think it necessary to prove it. Because, he says, "every man who believes the mind to be something more than ideas and exercises, and *does not admit the doctrine of casualty*, will acknowledge" it. President Edwards, in his work on original sin, has a whole chapter, in which he endeavours to prove that our first parents were created in righteousness, or, as he expresses it, "with holy principles and dispositions." The grand objection against this doctrine, he says, is this: "that it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of virtue, that it should be concreated with any person; because, if so, it must be by an act of God's absolute power, without our knowledge or concurrence; and that moral virtue, in its very nature, implieth the choice and consent of the



moral agent, without which it cannot be virtue and holiness : that a necessary holiness is no holiness ;" and he quotes from Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, the words, " Adam must exist, he must be created, yea, he must exercise thought and reflection before he was righteous." To this he replies, " In the first place, I think it a contradiction to the nature of things, as judged of by the common sense of mankind. It is agreeable to the sense of the minds of men in all ages, not only that the fruit or effect of a good choice is virtuous, but the good choice itself, from which that effect proceeds ; yea, and not only so, but also the antecedent good disposition, temper, or affection of mind from whence proceeds that good choice, is virtuous. This is the general notion, not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed ; and so that the act of choosing that which is good, is no further virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle, or virtuous disposition of mind ; which supposes, that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice ; and that, therefore, *it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection, and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition.* If the choice be first, before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what signifies that choice ? There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love, ambition, or some animal appetite."—P. 140. If there was a holy disposition before there was " thought, reflection, or choice," Edwards most assuredly carried moral distinctions back of moral acts. That by so doing he carried them into the " essential attributes of the soul," is an assertion founded on the assumption that what is not an act must be an essential attribute, which we believe few are prepared to admit. God has created man with various susceptibilities, dispositions or tendencies of mind towards objects without himself ; these tendencies are not necessarily " real existences, entities," or essential attributes, for tendencies or habits may, as before remarked, be acquired, as the skill of an artist, or a proneness to any particular mental exercise. They may result from the relative state of all the essential attributes, and yet be no " part of the soul " themselves. Their nature, however, is confessedly as inconceivable as the nature of the soul, and no more so ; and they are as necessarily assumed to account for the results which meet our view, as the soul or any of its attributes. If a million of intelligent beings, the first moment they think of the character of God, are filled with desire and delight, it is as evident that they were created with a proneness or disposition to take pleasure in holiness, as it is that the hearts of mothers have an innate tendency to love their children, because they glow with delight the first moment they are given to them. Nothing, we think, but the most determined adherence to a speculative opinion, can prevent any man acknowledging that it is as possible for the mind to be created with this " instinctive " love of holiness, as with a disposition for any other specific

class of objects. And we think, too, that the vast body of men will agree with President Edwards in thinking that "such a disposition's being natural, or from a kind of instinct, implanted in the mind in its creation," is no objection to its being of a virtuous or moral character. Does the maternal instinct cease to be amiable, because it is natural? Does a disposition to kindness and gentleness lose its character by being innate? Are not the instinctive love of justice, abhorrence of cruelty, admiration of what is noble, which God has implanted in our nature, objects of approbation? If our feelings and the general sense of mankind answer these questions in the affirmative, they as certainly will decide that an innate disposition to love God, existing in the mind of Adam at the moment of his creation, does not lose its moral character by being innate. The common feelings and judgment of men, therefore, do carry moral distinctions back of acts of choice, and must do so unless we deny that virtue ever can commence, for "there can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love."

If this be so, the very foundation of the objection that the common doctrine of regeneration destroys the responsibility of the sinner is taken away. This responsibility rests upon the fact, that he stands in the relation of a rational and moral creature to God. He has all the attributes of a moral agent—understanding, conscience, and will. He has unimpaired the liberty of acting according to his own inclinations. His mind is not subject to any law of causation, which determines his acts independently of himself. Motives, as external to the mind, have no influence, but as the mind itself, according to the laws of all rational creation, is affected by them and *voluntarily* admits their influence, and yields to it. The responsibility of man, therefore, resting on the immutable obligations which bind him to love and obey God, and on the possession of all the attributes of moral agency, is not destroyed by his moral depravity, of which the want of a disposition to holiness is an integral part. He does not love God, not because there is any physical defect in his constitution, but because his moral taste is perverted by reason of sin. He is so corrupt that even infinite loveliness appears hateful to him. There can, in the nature of things, be no reason why an intelligent and moral being should be blind to moral excellence, excepting moral corruption. And if this be an excuse, then the more depraved, the less he is to blame. How he became thus depraved is another question,—but it has nothing to do with the point before us, which is, the nature of the inability which it involves to love God. He may have been born so, or he may have made himself so. It makes no difference as to this point. So long as this depravity is his own, his own moral character, it can furnish no excuse or palliation for not complying with the great command of the law and Gospel. An object worthy of all affection is presented to his view, viz., the divine character; he is capable of intellectually apprehending this object.

If blind to its loveliness it is, in his own judgment and that of all men, his sin; it is the very height of corruption to view as unlovely what is the perfection of moral beauty. That men do labour under this moral blindness, is one of the most frequently asserted doctrines of the scriptures. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "These things," says our Saviour, "will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me." "To know God is eternal life." We are said to be saved through knowledge. The Gospel is "hid to them that are lost." Their eyes are blinded. Light has shined into the hearts of those that believe. The saints of old prayed to have their minds illuminated; and Paul intercedes for his fellow Christians earnestly and frequently for this blessing, as the only possible means of their sanctification. This is so plain, that President Edwards, in speaking on this subject, says, "*There is such a thing, if the scriptures are of any use to teach us anything, as a spiritual, supernatural understanding of divine things that are peculiar to the saints, and which those who are not saints know nothing of.*"—P. 298, *On the Affections*. The cause of this blindness is sin, and therefore it is inexcusable. But if it exists, there is an evident necessity for such a change in the soul, that it shall be brought to see this beauty of holiness, and from the constitution of our nature, this change must precede the exercise of love. For how can we love that which we do not see. The affections must have an object, and that object must be apprehended in its true nature, in order to be truly loved. It is obvious, therefore, that regeneration, to be of a moral character at all, must consist in such a change as brings the soul into a state to see and love the beauty of holiness. It matters not what the change be called—a "spiritual sense," or "a taste," or "disposition;" it is as necessary as that an object should be seen in order to be loved.

Now it is evident that all this must be denied by those who make regeneration to consist in the "act of loving God," who deny that there is any change prior in the order of nature to the exercise of love. For if the sinner is blind to God's loveliness, it is absolutely impossible that he should love it, until he is brought to see it. It may be said, that this is to render the sinner's case absolutely hopeless. So it is. And they do but delude and mock him, who represent it otherwise. It is thus the Bible represents it. It tells him that the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. And it is moreover necessary, that the sinner should be brought to feel that his case, as far as he himself is concerned, is absolutely hopeless; that he may be brought to fall, with his blind and wicked heart, at the feet of sovereign mercy, and cry, Lord save me! or I perish. But does this make the sinner excusable? not unless his sin is his excuse. It is this, and this alone, which prevents his perception of the loveliness of God, and, therefore, the more complete his blindness, the greater his loath-



someness and guilt. The two sentiments of complete helplessness, and of entire blame-worthiness, are perfectly consistent, and are ever united in Christian experience. The believer feels them every day. He knows that it is his duty, at once, to love God as purely, and fervently, and constantly, as do the saints made perfect. Yet he feels that no mere efforts of his own, no use of means, no presentation of motives, no summoning of his powers, will ever enable him to raise his carnal heart to heaven. Does this free him from a sense of guilt? No. He covers his face with both his hands, and bows down in the dust, and cries, Behold, I am vile. Have mercy on me, O Lord, and create within me a clean heart.

That the denial of the sinner's blindness to the holiness of God, is involved in the theory of regeneration under consideration, is perfectly evident, and is not, we presume, denied. If the mere choice of God, as the supreme portion of the soul, is regeneration, and the performance of this act constitutes the change, then of course no previous change is admitted to be necessary to enable him to make the choice; no opening of his eyes to see the moral excellence of the object he is to choose, no production of any sense of its loveliness; the choice itself is all that is demanded; and for this, everything is present that the act requires—the object, the capacity of viewing it in its true moral excellence, and the motive whence the choice is to proceed. For he need not choose God from any holy motive or intention (which would be to make holiness precede moral action), the simple desire of happiness is all that is required. The character of this first act does not depend on its motive. It is holy, though performed merely from the desire of self-gratification. This is a conclusion from which our minds instinctively revolt, and which, Edwards says, is contrary to the natural notions of men. It is, however, a conclusion which is legitimate and acknowledged, and being, in our view, a complete *reductio ad absurdum*, the system is fairly, in our humble apprehension, *felo de se*.

Dr. Cox asks whether it is not "intrinsically absurd," that a man should be regenerated before he does his duty? We think the absurdity is all the other way, that he should do his duty without being regenerated. That he should love God without having any proper perception of his character; or that an unholy soul should have this perception of the beauty of holiness. It appears to us a contradiction in terms to say, that a holy object can be viewed as excellent and desirable by a carnal mind; for a holy mind is best defined by saying, that it perceives and relishes the beauty of holiness. It is inconceivable to us, therefore, that any sinner should love God, without this previous change, except on one or the other of these two grounds; that all his acts are created in him, and he is really no agent at all, or that an act proceeding from mere self-love is holy. Both which contradict what to us are primary principles or intuitive truths. But how is it that regeneration precedes the exercise of love? As the opening of the eyes precedes sight;

as a sense of the beautiful precedes the emotion of beauty ; as the maternal instinct precedes maternal love. As it is impossible for a man to have his eyes open in the daytime without seeing, so it is impossible for a man to be regenerated without delighting in God. Yet opening the eyes is not seeing, nor is regeneration delighting in God. What the metaphysical nature of this change is, no one can tell. All the soul can say is, Whereas I was blind, now I see. What once appeared repulsive and "foolishness," now appears supremely desirable and excellent. What once excited enmity, now calls forth love. What once was irksome and difficult, is now easy and delightful. To say that these exercises themselves constitute the change, and the whole change, is to say that a wicked man is suddenly transformed in all his views, feelings, and conduct, without any reason for it. And to refer all to the immediate operations of the Spirit, is to make man a machine, or mere instrument, on which a mysterious hand plays what tune it pleases, to the delight or torment of the conscious but passive subject.

There is still another point. Dr. Cox speaks of this "certain kind of principle," as "a mysterious gratuity," with which the receiver has nothing to do. A something inserted in the soul in some magic manner to influence his exercises, but which forms no part of his character. We are persuaded that a fundamental difference, as to the nature of agency and human liberty, lies at the foundation of all such objections. We are as yet only fighting in the dark. The real turning point is yet in the background. We do not mean that it is intentionally kept there, but that these objections have not even the semblance of force, if (what is yet considered common ground) the Calvinistic theory of the will is retained. Was it a mere "mysterious gratuity," without moral character for him, that Adam was created in the image of God "with holy principles and dispositions?" Were these not voluntary principles? Was he not free in all his exercises of love determined by them? A disposition is not the less voluntary because it is innate. The affections are all voluntary, although concreated with us. Is a man less free in loving himself because self-love is a constitutional propensity? Does a mother love her child against her will, because she acts agreeably to her nature? Does not the disposition so to do enter into her character? If this be true with regard even to constitutional propensities, it is still more obviously true with respect to moral disposition, whether originally implanted or restored in regeneration. There is a continual play upon the double sense of the word voluntary. When the faculties of the soul are reduced to understanding and will, it is evident that the latter includes all the affections. In this sense, all liking or disliking, desiring or being averse to, &c., are voluntary, or acts of the will. But when we speak of the understanding, will, and affections, the word "will" includes much less. It is the power of the soul to come to a determination, to fix its choice on some object of desire. These two meanings are distinct, though they may relate

only to different states of the same faculty. In the latter sense, will and desire are not always coincident. A man may desire money and not will to take it, or make it an object of pursuit; he may not fix his choice upon it. The will is here determined by some other desire of greater force; desire of doing right, for example. When we speak of a volition, of a choice, of a decision or determination of the will, the word "will" is used in the restricted sense. A man may have many objects of desire before his mind; the decision which the will makes among them, or its selection, is its choice. There are a thousand things capable of ministering to our happiness; riches, honour, sensual pleasure, the service of God; the selection which the soul makes, is made by the will in the narrower sense. This is a voluntary act, in one sense of the term. But in another, the desire itself which the soul has for these objects, and not merely its decision or choice, is a voluntary act. For, according to Edwards, "all choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, *liking, disliking*, directing, commanding, *inclining*, or being averse, *a being pleased, or displeased with*," are acts of the will. In this sense, all the affections, and all desires, are voluntary exercises, whether constitutional or not, and not merely the decisions to which they lead. Hence self-love, the love of children, the love of society, the desire of esteem, are all voluntary, although all springing from native tendencies of the mind.

This distinction between these different senses of the word will, although frequently made, and formally stated, is yet, time after time, lost sight of in discussions of this nature; which gives rise to endless confusion. The word is often used in one sense in the premises of an argument, and in the other in the conclusion. How often is it said that a man can love God if he will? What does this mean? If will be here used in its narrower sense, this is not true. The affections no more obey a determination of the mind, than the emotions do. A man can no more will to love, to hate, to be pleased or displeased, than he can will to be joyful or sorrowful, gay or sad, or even hot or cold at any given moment. But if the word be taken in its larger sense, as including the affections, then the proposition is identical; it is saying, a man can love God if he does love God. And when Dr. Cox says there are some men who teach that a man has no ability to believe, even if he has the inclination; the very statement is absurd. For if the mind is inclined to embrace the truth in its real character, it does believe.

Although the advocates of the theory, that morality attaches only to acts of choice, lay down as the foundation of their doctrine Edwards's definition of the will as given above, yet it is plain that in a multitude of cases they confine acts of choice to acts of the will in the restricted sense. Thus the desire of money becomes avarice, they say, only when the will comes in and decides on money as the main object of pursuit. Self-esteem is not pride, until the will decides on preferring our own claims unduly. In all such cases it is the will, as the faculty of decision between dif-



ferent objects of desire, that is intended. It is to acts of the will in this restricted sense, and to the states of mind thence resulting, and not to voluntary acts in the broad sense of President Edwards, that morality is made to attach. Hence, in the case of Adam, the desire excited by a view of the divine affections, has no moral character. That belongs only to the act of the will which fixes on God as the chief good. And the first holy act of a new-born soul is not the desire which rises in view of the Divine Being, but the act of the will by which he is chosen as a portion. Hence, in the distinction between constitutional and voluntary propensities, the social affections, the love of children, desire of esteem, &c., are referred to the former class, and are not considered as voluntary. Yet, in the broad sense of the word will, assumed as the foundation of the theory, according to which, all "inclining or being averse," all "being pleased or displeased with," are acts of the will, they are as truly voluntary as the others. Now, when it is asserted that no disposition is of a moral character, except so far as it depends on choice or preference, and that all morality lies in the will, the whole meaning turns on the sense in which the word will is taken. If taken in its broader sense, this would be admitted; if in the restricted sense, we should deny it altogether. Those who make the assertion, doubtless take it in the latter; for they say that all that precedes the decision of the soul, its fixing on some object of desire as its chief portion, is neither sinful nor holy; that holiness consists in the selection of God, and sin in the choice of the world, and that there is nothing sinful nor holy but these primary or ultimate choices, and the subordinate acts resulting from them. But it is clear that the term voluntary applies not only to such acts of choice, but to all exercises of the affections or desires preliminary thereto. No one would say that the disposition to love ourselves, or our children, depends on choice; and yet these dispositions are properly and truly voluntary. We cannot love otherwise than voluntarily. When, therefore, these gentlemen use the word voluntary, it is in reference to acts of the will in the restricted sense, excluding the spontaneous exercises of the native propensities of our nature. They of course deny that Adam was created holy. The spontaneous rising of desire in his mind to God was neither holy nor unholy. His moral character commenced with the first act of choice, that is, with his selection of God from among the various sources of happiness as his chief good. Here lies one great point of difference between them and common Calvinists. President Edwards maintains clearly that Adam was holy before this act of choice, yea, before he exercised "thought or reflection." And he says, that it is according to our natural notions of things that there could be no virtue in this choice, unless it was determined by a virtuous disposition. The common judgment of men is, that moral character belongs to the desire of moral objects. The morality lies in its nature, independently of its origin. Its being from "a kind of instinct," does not destroy its moral character. The desire of holiness is holy,

no matter how it rises in the mind. If this be so, a similar tendency of mind and a similar desire, if produced in our mind by the power of the spirit in regeneration, is not "something inserted in the soul" without influence on our character. It constitutes us holy, as truly as Adam was holy at his first creation, though much of sin may yet remain. It is indeed "a mysterious gratuity;" the scriptures call it GRACE; but it is still ours, from its nature, voluntary and active. It is an inclination of the heart, and, as Dr. Bellamy remarks, an "involuntary inclination of the heart is a contradiction in terms." He uses the word voluntary in its larger sense, as Edwards does, and not merely in that which applies to a decision or selection from among different objects of desire. With him all spontaneous exercises of the mind are voluntary; self-love, the love of children, and all other similar affections. A disposition therefore to these, or any other exercises, existing prior to the exercises, in his view, does not destroy their character as voluntary, nor their morality, if they have reference to moral objects; this depends upon their nature, not their origin.

We have already remarked that the opposite system destroys the moral character of the first act (in reference to moral objects) in Adam, and in regeneration. We are ready to admit, that as the desire of a holy object is from its nature holy, so the choice of such an object as holy, is from its nature good. But it is inconceivable that holiness, as such, can be chosen without a previous apprehension of its real excellence, and desire for it as such; for the choice is but the determination of the desire. If, therefore, moral character be denied to the antecedent desire, the choice loses its moral character also. It cannot be confined to the act of choice, for there can, in fact, be no choice of a holy object as such, but from a desire for it in its true character, and this is a holy desire, and precedes the choice. If self-love be only so far the motive to this choice, that it "prompts to the choice, but not determines it," what, we ask, does determine it? There are but two answers to this question. The one is, that the will determines itself, i. e., the choice is made in indifference, and has clearly no moral character; or it is determined by a desire of the object as such (not mere desire of happiness, for that only prompts the choice, *not determines it*), and then the whole theory is relinquished, for here is the desire of a holy object, not merely as a means of happiness, but for the object as holy, which must needs be a holy desire, and being antecedent to the choice, would be, according to the theory, anterior to the commencement of holiness.

The truth is, that this whole system is a forced and unnatural union between Arminian philosophy and Calvinistic facts; a union which can neither be peaceful nor lasting. Nor is this the first time that it has been attempted. The favourite principle of the opposers of the doctrines which are now called Calvinistic, in all ages, has been, that moral character can only belong to acts of choice; and, of course, that no such thing as original righteousness or ori-

ginal sin is possible or conceivable ; that any other influence in regeneration than that of moral suasion, by which one man is led to make a good choice, which another man, under the same influence, might refuse to make, is inconsistent with moral agency ; that doctrines of election and perseverance of the saints, presupposing that of efficacious grace, must necessarily be untrue. The first departures from these doctrines have commenced by adopting the main principle, and endeavouring to reconcile it, as far as possible, with the facts involved in the doctrines themselves ; viz., that all men do sin, with absolute certainty, the moment they become moral agents ; that the influence of the Spirit is infallibly efficacious : and that all whom God has chosen certainly believe and attain eternal life. But less than a generation has commonly been sufficient to break the connexion, and leave the philosophical principle undisputed master of the field.

That this principle is inconsistent with the doctrine of original righteousness, is formally admitted. That it involves the denial of original sin, as this doctrine has been commonly held among Calvinists, is equally clear. According to the prevalent doctrine on this subject, original sin consists, first, in the imputation of Adam's sin. This, it seems, has been long exploded. Secondly, in the want of original righteousness. This is gone too, for there never was any such thing. And thirdly, in the corruption of nature, that is, a tendency to do what God has prohibited, existing prior to all acts of choice, and independently of them ; and now this is gone. There is no such tendency to sin, as can be considered a moral disposition.

Although this article has already swollen far beyond our expectations, we cannot pass this subject without a single remark on the charge of physical depravity. The futility and unfairness of the same charge, as it regards the subject of regeneration, we have endeavoured to expose above. As this rests on precisely the same grounds, it must stand or fall with the other. If there may be moral principles prior to moral acts (as we think must be assumed, in the case of Adam, or make the commencement of holiness impossible), then there is not a shadow of ground for this charge. Nor is it the Calvinistic doctrine, that there is a specific propensity to sin (analogous to the holy disposition implanted in the heart of Adam), connatural with the soul of man. None such need be assumed, and none such is believed to exist. The mere absence of a native tendency to God leaves the soul in moral confusion and ruin. There is no positive infusion of wickedness. The essential attributes and constitutional propensities are there, and nothing more. But they are there without a principle of moral order and subordination. There is no presiding spirit to turn them to the service of God. The result of this absence is all manner of evil, and a tendency to all this evil lies in this very state of the soul, and exists prior to any of its moral acts. Does the withholding this predisposition to holiness, from a being to whom all the essen-



tial attributes of his nature are left unimpaired, make God the author of sin? then must he be accused of being the author of all sin that results from the abandonment of the reprobate, and of all that by the utmost exertion of his power he could prevent. Nor is it more difficult to reconcile this fact (that God should withhold from the fallen race of man those communications which resulted in the innate tendency to holiness, which filled the soul of Adam) with the divine justice and goodness, than it is the admitted fact that he has brought, and is still bringing, the countless millions of the human family into existence under circumstances so unfavourable, that all, without exception, incur the penalty of eternal death at the first moment of moral agency. And that moment arriving, too, at the first dawn of intellect, and when the first faint flushes of moral feeling rise in the soul. If this be no penalty, we know not what is. "To be placed under a law," says Coleridge (*Aids to Reflection*, p. 168), "the difficulty of obeying, and the consequences of not obeying which, are both infinite, and to have momentarily to struggle with this difficulty, and to live in momentarily hazard of these consequences—if this be no punishment!—words have no correspondence with thoughts, and thoughts are but shadows of each other, shadows that own no substance for their anti-type. Of such an outrage on common sense, Taylor (Bishop Jeremy) was incapable. He himself calls it a penalty; he admits that in effect it is a punishment." It is a penalty, too, according to this theory, without transgression; a punishment without a crime. We cannot see, therefore, that anything is gained by the new theory over the old doctrine, which represents our race as having enjoyed a full and fair and favourable probation in their first parent, and as being regarded and treated as an apostate race on account of his rebellion; so that the withholding those divine communications which resulted in the first man, in the moral image of his Maker, is a penal evil, from which, it is true, utter ruin results, but it is the ruin, not of innocent, but of fallen human beings. This doctrine involves no mysterious confusion of the identity of the race with that of Adam, and no transfer of moral character from him to us. His act was personally his own, and only his; it is ours only on the representative principle, which is recognised not only by Dr. Hopkins and his followers distinctly, but by Arminians and Pelagians,\* and is so clearly taught by the fact, that the race fell when Adam fell, that it is admitted in reality even by those who formally deny it.

But to return to our subject. This theory not only overthrows the doctrines which we have just mentioned, but it throws the Spirit's influences almost entirely out of view. We are not speaking of the opinions of its advocates, but of the tendency of the theory. According to their views, regeneration consists in the choice of God as the supreme portion of the soul. This requires that the soul should view him as supremely desirable. This the

\* See Whitby on Romans, v. 12.

sinner is, not only naturally, but morally, able to do; for his corruption does not blind him to the excellence of holiness, or its adaptedness to promote his happiness. To secure this happiness is the only impulse or motive necessary to make this choice, and he is urged to make it, assured that if he will summon all his powers to the effort, the result, by the grace of God, may follow. We think the grace of God acts a part scarcely more conspicuous in all this scheme, than it does in the enumeration of the titles of an European monarch. There is no blindness to the excellence of the object of choice to be removed, no holy motive is necessary for the grand decision; all that is required is a practical conviction that it will be for the sinner's interests. Firmly as these brethren may believe in the necessity of the Spirit's interference, it is evident that necessity is left out of view almost entirely in their theory. Accordingly, when they come to describe the process of this great change, the sinner is the only agent brought to view; he is to consider, ponder and decide, for all which he absolutely needs no assistance, though it may be graciously afforded. This mode of representation stands in strong contrast with the language of scripture in those passages in which we are said "to be born of the Spirit," "to be created anew in Christ Jesus," to experience the workings "of the exceeding greatness of the power of God," and many others of a similar character.

As to the point which Dr. Cox thinks so "intrinsically absurd," and about which he says so much, whether man is passive in regeneration, it will be seen that, for its own sake, it does not merit a moment's discussion. It depends entirely on the previous question. If regeneration be that act of the soul by which it chooses God for its portion, there is an end of all debate on the subject. For no one will maintain that the soul is passive in acting. But if there be any change in the moral state of the soul, prior to its turning unto God, then it is proper to say, that the soul is passive as to that particular point. That is, that the Holy Spirit is the author, and the soul the subject of the change. For all that is meant by the soul's being passive, is, that it is not the agent of the change in question. Its immediate and delightful turning unto God is its own act, the state of mind which leads to this act is produced directly by the spirit of God. The whole question is, whether any such anterior change is necessary. Whether a soul polluted and degraded by sin, or in scripture language, carnal, needs any change in its moral taste before it can behold the loveliness of the divine character. For that this view must precede the exercise of affection, we presume will not be denied. If this point be decided, the propriety of using the word passive to denote that the soul is the subject and not the agent of the change in question, need not give us much trouble. Sure it is that this change is in scripture always referred to the Holy Spirit. It is the soul that repents, believes, hopes and fears, but it is the Holy Spirit that regenerates. He is the author of our faith and repentance by inducing us to act,

but no man regenerates himself. The soul, though essentially active, is still capable of being acted upon. It receives impressions from sensible objects, from other spirits and from the Holy Ghost. In every sensation, there is an impression made by some external object, and the immediate knowledge which the mind takes of the impression. As to the first point, it is passive, or the subject; as to the second, it is active, or the agent. These two are indeed inseparably connected, and so are regeneration and conversion. It is even allowable to say that the mind is passive considered as the recipient of any impression, no matter how communicated. Coleridge says, "In ATTENTION, we keep the mind *passive*; in THOUGHT, we rouse it into activity. In the former, we submit to an impression, we keep the mind steady in order to receive the stamp."—P. 252. Whether this is technically "wretched, philosophically wrong, and theologically false," or not, we do not pretend to say. All that we say is, that it is perfectly intelligible and perfectly according to established usage, to speak of the mind as passive, when considered as the subject of an impression. And if the Holy Spirit does make such an impression on the mind, or exert such an influence as induces it immediately to turn to God, then it is correct to say that it is passive in regeneration, though active in conversion. However, this is a very subordinate point; the main question is, whether there is not a holy "relish," taste, or principle produced in the soul prior, in the order of nature, to any holy act of the soul itself. If Dr. Cox can show this to be "intrinsically absurd," we shall give up the question of "passivity," without a moment's demur. To relinquish the other point, however, will cost us a painful struggle. It will be the giving up the main point in debate between the friends and opposers of the doctrines of grace from Augustine to the present day. It will be the renunciation, not only of a favourite principle of old Calvinists, but of one of the fundamental principles of the theology of Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, and, as we believe, of the great body of the New England clergy. It will be the renunciation of what Calvinists, old and new, have believed to be the scriptural doctrine of original righteousness, original sin and efficacious grace. It will be the rejection of that whole system of mingled sovereignty and love which has been the foundation, for ages, of so many hopes and of so much blessedness to the people of God. And all for what? Because it has been discovered, that what is not an act is an entity; that to suppose the existence of moral disposition prior to moral action, is making morality a substance. As we are incapable of seeing the truth of these axioms, and believe their assumption to be encumbered with all the difficulties above referred to, we are not disposed to renounce, on their behalf, doctrines which have for ages been held dear by the best portion of the Christian church.

Dr. Cox demands what has been the moral history of these doctrines? It would require more time and space than we can now command fully to answer this question. Not to enter on question-



able ground, however, we would refer him for an answer to the history of the reformation. These doctrines were held sacred by all those men who were God's great instruments in that blessed work, and are incorporated in the confessions of all the reformed churches. We would point him to the history of the English Puritans and Nonconformists; to the Puritans of New England, from the time of their landing down to a late period in their history, and to the present opinions of the great body of their descendants. We would refer him to any age or any church, peculiarly distinguished for genuine piety. For there is scarcely one of the doctrines which he has empaled in his introduction (with the exception of the mere extent of the atonement, a point of very subordinate importance to that of its nature), which does not enter into the faith of the great body of evangelical Christians. We have no doubt that Dr. Cox believes these doctrines. What we lament is, that he should have "caricatured" the manner in which the vast majority of those who hold them have been accustomed to represent them, and that he should even seem to advocate a principle which we fear is subversive of them all.

## ESSAY XVII.

# SANCTIFICATION.\*

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THIS judicious and excellent treatise presents, in a small compass, the substance of the modern controversy on the doctrine of entire sanctification in the present life. The author's statements are calm and clear, his method logical, his arguments conclusive, and his style simple and dignified. Though it is not long since we called the attention of our readers to this subject, especially in the form in which it is presented by the Oberlin professors, we think they will not regard the following pages as misapplied, when they consider how ceaseless are the efforts of the advocates of error to propagate a doctrine which the history of the church teaches us seldom fails to become, in one form or other, an apology for sin.

The notion of the actual attainment, in some instances, of perfect virtue in this life, is so gratifying to human pride, that we need not wonder at its adoption by some in nearly every age of the world. Contrary as it is to scripture and experience, it is too deeply radiated in man's selfishness, not to find apologists and advocates among the conceited, the enthusiastic, and such as are unaccustomed to an impartial scrutiny of their own hearts. It flatters exceedingly all those pretensions to superior sanctity which are disjoined from humility, penitence, and ardent aspirations after entire assimilation to the perfection of the divine moral character. In most of the false religions of the earth, the doctrine of human perfection, manifested in at least some peculiarly favoured instances, has, if we mistake not, formed an essential article of belief; and in all countries, perhaps, individuals have been found, possessing an exemption from the common frailties of their race. A kind of perfection has been claimed for Greek and Roman sages, for Hindoo devotees, for Mahomedan saints; and even for the savage warrior, smiling in death at the impotent efforts of his enemies to extract from his agonized nature the shriek, or the groan of suffering. That Pantheism, which is the philosophical basis of most of the popular sys-

\* Published in 1842, in review of "The Scriptural Doctrine of Sanctification stated and defended against the error of Perfectionism. By W. D. Snodgrass, D.D." Philadelphia.

tems of idolatry, assumes as a fundamental position, such a union of man to the Deity, as constitutes the leading principle of modern perfectionism, in its purest and most sublimated form. Hence originates the deification of men, as well as the divine worship paid to stocks, stones, rivers, mountains, wind, and all the inferior parts of the creation ; Pantheism (elevating a creature of yesterday to the rank of a divinity), which is supposed by many to have been of more ancient date than the universal deluge,\* was maintained in all the following ages till the time of Christ, and was not entirely relinquished even by some of his professed disciples. Holding such a principle, they were prepared to adopt other opinions equally preposterous and unchristian. To this, perhaps, should be attributed, in part, at least, the antinomianism and perfectionism of some of the heretics in the apostolic age—so the Nicolaitans and Simonians—who maintained that they were released from all obligation to the law, and that none of their actions, however contrary to the letter of the precept, were really opposed to the divine will and worthy of punishment : and how could they, who were parts of God, or rather identical with him, commit sin ? “ The Gnostics of the first and second centuries, and the Manichaeans of the third, believed human souls to be particles of the celestial light, of the same essential nature with God himself, and no otherwise corrupt or corruptible, than by being combined with sinful matter. The new Platonists of Egypt held substantially the same opinions. Hieronymus, in the preface to his dialogues against Pelagius, says that Manichaeus, Precillian, Evagrinus, Hyperboreus, Flavianian, Origen, and the Menalians of Syria, were Perfectionists.”† The brethren and sisters of the Free Spirit, in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, held that all things flowed by emanation from God ; that rational souls were portions of the divine essence ; that the universe was God ; and that by the power of contemplation, they were united to the Deity, and acquired hereby a glorious and sublime liberty, both from sinful lusts, and the common instinct of nature.‡ “ In the latter part of the seventeenth century, the disciples of Michael de Molinos in Spain, France, and Italy, were Perfectionists.”§ It is worthy of remark, that in none of all these, during so many successive centuries, do we trace any evidence of the belief of the direct agency of the Holy Spirit on the heart, turning its affections to God, and securing the perfection of its obedience. For the most part, they asserted, that regeneration and complete deliverance from sin could be effected by contemplation, and the soul thus be so identified with God as to constitute them not two things united, but one being ; and in this way, they explained the indwelling and controlling agency of the Most High in man. Of the reality and presence of

\* See the Princeton Review, vol. xiii., p. 539.

† Literary and Theological Review, vol. iii., p. 23.

‡ Buck's Theological Dict. and Mosheim.

§ Lit. and Theological Review, ut supra.



native moral corruption, as maintained by consistent Calvinists, they seem to have had no conception.\* Pelagius and Coelestius, in the fourth century, who denied the innate sinfulness of the human heart, and the consequent necessity of efficacious grace in its renewal, maintained, with entire systematic consistency, that men might live without sin during the whole period of their life; that some had actually so lived for so many years, and that others, restored by repentance after transgression, had subsequently continued perfect in holiness to the close of their days.† The primitive Quakers, the French Prophets, the Shakers, Jemima Wilkinson, Joanna Southcott, and the great body of Mystics in every communion, held to perfection in this life, as the attainment of the privileged few; and the advocates of this doctrine have usually represented the denial of it as involving great licentiousness, and a state of utter spiritual bondage. The views of the famous John Wesley, the father of Arminian Methodism, are well known to the reading part of the religious community. He affirmed, as Whitfield asserts, "that no Baptist or Presbyterian writer, whom he had ever read, knew anything of the liberties of Christ;" to which statement Whitfield replied, in his own pointed and emphatical manner—"What! neither Bunyan, Henry, Flavel, Halyburton, nor any of the New England and Scotch Divines? See, dear sir, what narrow-spiritedness and want of charity arise from your principles; and then do not say aught against election any more, on account of its being destructive of meekness and love. I know you think meanly of Abraham, though he was eminently called the friend of God, and I believe also of David, the man after God's own heart."‡ Wesley gives us an account of the steps by which he was led, during a course of many years, to embrace what he calls the doctrine of "Christian perfection," which, as he explains it, though it includes the idea of freedom from sin, implies neither perfection in knowledge nor infallibility, nor security against temptations and infirmities.§ According to the system of the Romish church, good men may not only attain to perfection, but perform, moreover, works of supererogation, serving as a fund of merit, for the advantage of believers of inferior spiritual attainments.

It is not till lately that Perfectionism has been professed within the pale of Congregational and Presbyterian churches. By our fathers it was accounted heresy, inconsistent with the express testimony of the scriptures, contradictory to Christian experience, and subversive of the entire scheme of the Gospel. But, in consequence of certain Pelagian speculations concerning moral agency,

\* Lit. and The. Review, vol. iii., p. 28.

† Lit. and The. Review, vol. iii., p. 29, where we have in a note a curious specimen of the arguments of Coelestius on this subject. Also Wigger's Hist. of Augustinism and Pelagianism.

‡ Gillies's Life of Whitfield, New Haven edition, 1812, p. 256.

§ Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection, New York edition, 1837, pp. 3, 18, et passim.

human ability, and the divine influence in sanctification—errors that have become extensively popular—individuals, once reputed most zealous for revivals of religion, have been led to join Pelagius and other kindred spirits, in their views of the attainableness of perfection in the present life. Such, as we believe, is the philosophical origin of Perfectionism, as held by the professors at Oberlin and their theological friends.

That we may not misrepresent the meaning of those to whom we refer, we will state their doctrine of perfection in their own language. "What is perfection in holiness? In answer to this inquiry I would remark," says Mr. Mahan,\* "that perfection in holiness implies a full and perfect discharge of our entire duty, of all existing obligations in respect to God and all other beings. It is perfect obedience to the moral law." With respect to the attainableness of perfection in this life, the same writer says, "We have evidence just as conclusive, that perfect and perpetual holiness is promised to Christians, as we have that it is required of them." "We have the same evidence from scripture, that all Christians may, and that some of them will, attain to a state of entire sanctification in this life, that they will attain to that state in heaven." "There is positive evidence that some of them did attain to this state." Mr. Finney affirms, and in this, we suppose, he expresses the opinion of his associates at Oberlin, that sinless perfection for the time being, is implied in the lowest degree of true piety. "It seems to be a very general opinion," says he, "that there is such a thing as imperfect obedience to God, i. e. as it respects one and the same act; but I cannot see how an imperfect obedience, relating to one and the same act, can be possible. Imperfect obedience! What can be meant by this, but disobedient obedience! a sinful holiness! Now, to decide the character of any act, we are to bring it into the light of the law of God; if agreeable to this law, it is obedience—it is right—wholly right. If it is in any respect different from what the law of God requires, it is wrong—wholly wrong."† Here we have the doctrine that all Christians are sometimes perfect, or are perfect so far as they have any true holiness; and it is a very natural inference from such premises, that believers may attain to a confirmed state of perfection in the present life. This conclusion is adopted by Mr. Finney, as well as Mr. Mahan.

To disprove the perfectionism taught in the above extracts, or to show that none of the saints are entirely free from sin in the present life, will be our object in this essay.

We shall begin with noticing the principal arguments, which are commonly adduced by perfectionists of different descriptions, in support of their views of this subject. We shall next exhibit direct evidence of the sinful imperfection of the heart of the saints, in this life; and lastly, we shall show the great practical importance of

\* Christian Perfection, pp. 4, 27, 39.

† Oberlin Evangelist, vol. 1.

the doctrine for which we contend, in opposition to the error which it controverts.

The arguments of the perfectionists are first to be considered.

The command of God requires perfection, is one of their arguments. Answer. It is doubtless true, that the Most High does command us to be perfect ; and to enjoin anything less than perfection, would be inconsistent with his own purity, and those eternal principles of rectitude, according to which he governs the universe. The law expresses his feelings towards moral objects ; but it leaves wholly undetermined the question, whether his rational creatures will acknowledge, or reject his authority. His command, in any instance, neither supposes that it will be obeyed, nor implies any insincerity in him, provided he foresees that it will not be obeyed. The contrary supposition would be incompatible with some of the most undeniable facts of revealed religion. Does the divine command to be perfect, prove that some may, or will obey this righteous precept ? Then, for the same reason, the divine prohibition of all sin in mankind equally proves that some of them may pass through a long life without a single act of transgression. It is by no means certain, therefore, that all the human race are or have been sinners : and, of course, the doctrine of universal depravity, unequivocally and frequently as it is taught in the scriptures, may be false. It is as easy to imagine that some never sin, as that they become perfectly holy after they have acquired a sinful character. The opinion of Pelagius with regard to this subject was, therefore, more specious and more logical than is the notion of those who make God's requirement of perfect sanctification an argument that some are perfectly sanctified in this life ; while, with strange inconsistency, they assert the universal moral depravity, anterior to conversion, of such of mankind as have sufficient knowledge to be moral agents. Besides, entire holiness is plainly obligatory on all rational creatures ; and no strength of depraved affection or hopelessness of condition can release any from the demands of the law of God. On this principle, the devils, in their place of torment, are bound to love their Maker, and yield themselves implicitly to his authority. To say they are not thus bound, is to take their part against their Maker, and pronounce them entirely excusable and innocent in their present rebellion, rage and blasphemy. But does it follow, because they are under law, that they will, therefore, ever return to their duty ? The Bible, on the other hand, assures us, that their misery, and consequently, their enmity to God, will be without end.

The command of God, it is alleged, implies our ability to obey ; and it is reasonable to suppose that where ability exists, it will sometimes at least manifest itself by obedience. This argument has been strongly urged, both to account for the existence of sin (for where there is ability to obey, there is also supposed to be ability to disobey, or " the power of contrary choice "), and to show the practicability of obedience, in the highest degree, to all the di-



vine requisitions. "Were it not," says Mr. Finney,\* "that there is a sense in which a man's heart may be better than his head, I should feel bound to maintain, that persons holding this sentiment, that man is unable to obey God without the Spirit's agency, were no Christians at all—obligation is only commensurate with ability."

Again he says,† "Certain it is that men are able to resist the utmost influence that the truth can exert upon them, and, therefore, have ability to defeat the wisest, most benevolent, and most powerful exertions which the Holy Spirit can make to effect their sanctification." Mr. Mahan says,‡ "I infer that a state of perfect holiness is attainable in this life, from the commands of scripture, addressed to Christians under the new covenant." The philosophy, from which perfection is thus inferred, had been previously asserted by certain divines of celebrity in Connecticut. In proof of this, the reader is referred to two or three citations from the *Christian Spectator*, formerly published at New-Haven. "Free moral agents can do wrong under all possible preventing influence."§ "We know that a moral system necessarily implies the existence of free agents, with the power to act in despite of all opposing power. This fact sets human reason at defiance, in every attempt to prove that some of these agents will not use that power, and actually sin."|| Again: "God not only prefers on the whole that his creatures should for ever perform their duties rather than neglect them, but purposes on his part to do all in his power to promote this very object of his kingdom."¶ In all these statements, the implication is clear, that men are, of course, able to do whatever God requires of them; and that the mind is in reality self-moved in all its moral exercises.

We readily admit that men have the requisite faculties to obey God; in other words, that they are moral agents. And this is often what is meant by natural ability. We admit, also, that the inability of sinners is a moral inability, inasmuch as it relates to moral objects, arises from moral causes, and is removed by a moral change. The possession, however, of natural ability, in the sense just stated, does not establish the conclusion contended for in the preceding argument. Because men or devils have the requisite intellectual or physical faculties to serve their Creator, does it certainly follow that they will serve him? As it regards moral ability, it is absurd to imagine that the rule of duty is to be measured by this. On this supposition there is really no rule of right except the inclinations of creatures; or, guilt is diminished in proportion to the stubbornness and virulence of the principle of evil to be overcome; which is but saying, in other language, that the more sinful, the more bent on rebellion any one is, the less is he to blame for his disobedience. Mankind by nature, then, are perfectly inno-

\* Lectures on Revivals of Religion, p. 17.

† Oberlin Evangelist, Lect. 21, p. 193.

‡ Christian Perfection, p. 28.

§ *Christian Spectator*, 1830, p. 563.

|| *Ibid.*, 1831, p. 617. ¶ *Ibid.*, 1832, p. 660.

cent in hating God, and in rejecting the manifold overtures of the Gospel; for it is clear from this inspired volume, that they are "dead in trespasses and sins." Their disinclination to obedience is affirmed to be so great that it can be overcome by nothing less than the direct exertion of Almighty power. "No man," says Christ, "can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him." Accordingly, the commencement of holiness in the sinner's heart is again and again described by such phrases as indicate the highest manifestation of the immediate and creative agency of God. It is the donation of a new heart—a second birth—a new creation—a resurrection from the dead. These figures, strong as they are, are doubtless used with the utmost propriety, as most happily expressive of the inveteracy of the evil disposition to be vanquished, of the sinner's moral helplessness, and of his absolute dependence on sovereign grace. The continuance of believers in obedience is also constantly ascribed to the same power by which they were originally renewed after the image of God. "Without me," says Jesus Christ, "you can do nothing." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Here we learn that the growth of the fruit in the first instance, and its permanency afterwards, are both owing to the choice, purpose, and effectual agency of the Redeemer. "We are not sufficient of ourselves," says Paul, "to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in God, will perform (finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ." The good work here intended is doubtless, as appears from the connexion, the implantation of holiness in the heart by the efficacious grace of God. "Who are kept," says Peter, "by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." From these passages, and, indeed, from the whole tenor of the Bible, it is evident that, whatever may be men's natural power, or freedom as moral agents, their depraved propensities present as effectual an obstacle to obedience, as the want of liberty itself would do. At the same time, they are constantly blamed for that disinclination, or moral inability, which, but for the interposition of omnipotent grace, insures their destruction. They have ruined themselves; and their only hope is in the mercy and unconquerable might of their injured Creator, who may justly leave them to perish in their perverseness. There is no reason, then, for the conclusion, that because men have the natural ability, they will, therefore, obey the law of God, any more than there is ground for arguing with Pelagius, that a portion of the human race will live without sin, from the commencement of their existence till death; and, consequently, that for them, no repentance, no pardon, no Saviour, will be necessary; or, than there is ground for inferring with Universalists, the future probable, if not certain return of devils and the spirits of lost men in hell, to their duty and to happiness. The argument from ability, therefore, in this instance, is of too wide a

sweep in its general application, to be admitted as of any force; for it manifestly goes to undermine the whole Gospel, and overthrow all the revealed principles of the moral government of God.

Another argument, connected with the foregoing, in favour of Perfectionism, is founded in an erroneous philosophy concerning the nature of sin. This affirms, that those propensities which we cannot overcome by the force of our own sovereign determination, are merely constitutional susceptibilities, or physical attributes, having no moral character, the extirpation, or extinguishment of which is, consequently, not necessary to sinless perfection. Thus it has been argued, that the most selfish innate desires and passions are in themselves innocent, being nothing more than incentives or occasions to sin, which must be expected to continue after the heart has become completely sanctified.

This summary method of disposing of the subject must doubtless be very gratifying to those who choose rather to find an apology for their sins, than to confess and mourn over them before God. Where there is no sin, there is surely no occasion for godly sorrow on account of sin. Let the standard of duty be low enough, and it will be easy to show that perfection belongs to many men, or to all men, or even to the inhabitants of hell themselves. Suppose, for example, that malice, hatred of God, enmity to creatures, and furious blasphemy, under circumstances of hopeless suffering, are not criminal; and it will follow, incontrovertibly, that these feelings and acts are perfectly innocent in Satan and his hosts, in their present state of misery. God cannot, therefore, with propriety, punish them for their present irreconcilable malignity, and that conduct which flows spontaneously from their hearts. In this view of the subject, the devils are as truly perfect now as they were when they existed enthroned seraphs in the heavenly paradise. Their condition has, indeed, been changed; but, then, the divine law has been altered to suit their new condition. To bring this reasoning to bear on the case before us—if the natural passions of anger, revenge, covetousness, pride, and ambition, be not in themselves wrong, and if nothing but strong resolutions against sin, a resistance of our evil propensities, a devout and moral life, and reliance on the grace of Christ, be needful to constitute a sinless character, then we admit that many of the human race have attained to perfection in this life. Yea, verily, according to this philosophy, sinless perfection is consistent with an eternal war in the breast between principle and passion; and, as there is reason to suppose that the physical attributes of the soul will continue after death, it is next to certain that the saints in glory will be obliged to maintain an unceasing conflict with such innocent things as their love of self-indulgence, their fondness for distinction and power, and their constitutional susceptibility to resentment and revenge. Deny the principle of concupiscence to be sinful, and what hinders its existence, its disquieting irruptions, its violent onsets even within the walls of New Jerusalem?



This philosophy requires an exposition of the law entirely contrary to the scriptures. The sacred volume condemns the first risings of inordinate desire, and, of course, all vicious tendencies to transgression in the soul. "Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer." "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." It requires us, not merely to choose and strive after, but to possess and exercise right affections and passions; to love God and our neighbour; to feel kindly even to our enemies. "Thou shalt not covet," is one of its express prohibitions. Yet coveting may exist, when from the restraints of conscience and fear there is no effort, no purpose to obtain the desired object. The affection is wrong and is forbidden, though it lead to no correspondent external acts, or conscious determinative volition of the mind.

It was an apprehension of the spirituality of the law which convinced the Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, of the exceeding corruption of his heart, and destroyed all his self-righteous hopes. "I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust" (concupiscence), that is, I had not known that it was sin, "except the law had said, thou shalt not covet." "For I was alive without" (a just apprehension and sense of) "the law once; but when the commandment came" (with a clear view of its spiritual requirements and immutable obligation), "sin revived, and I died." Thus plain it is, that whether we call the principle of concupiscence constitutional or not, it is still sinful in the eye of the law. Words may create confusion in the mind, but they do not change the nature of things. So long as the Christian is agitated, in any degree, by excessive or ill-directed desires, he is deficient in his obedience, and therefore continues to be a transgressor.

Changing his ground, the advocate of the doctrine of perfection in this life sometimes asserts, that though Christians cannot accomplish their own sanctification, and ought not to attempt it, yet if they cast themselves upon Christ for this boon it will be bestowed upon them. Instead of working themselves, they must come to Christ to work in them, both to will and to do, and he will make them perfect. This notion, too, is affirmed by the very men who contend, when it suits their purpose, that sinners have perfect ability to change their own hearts, and believers perfect ability to do all that is required of them. "I am willing to proclaim it to the world," says Mr. Mahan,\* "that I now look to the very God of peace to sanctify me wholly." "I have for ever given up all idea of resisting temptation, subduing any lust, appetite, or propensity, or of acceptably performing any service for Christ, by the mere force of my own resolutions. If any propensities which lead to sin are sacrificed, I know it must be done by an indwelling Christ." "If you will cease from all efforts of your own, and bring your sins, and sorrows, and cares, and propensities, which

\* Christian Perfection, pp. 189, 190, 191.

lead to sin, to Christ, and cast them all upon him—if, with implicit faith, you will hang your whole being upon him, and make it the great object of life to know him, for the purpose of receiving and reflecting his image—you will find that all the exceeding great and precious promises of his word are, in your own blissful experience, a living reality.” “You shall have a perpetual and joyful victory.” “Everywhere, and under all circumstances, your peace in Christ shall be as a river.”

From these and other similar passages in the writings of the new Perfectionists, it would seem that Christians have nothing to do but to lie passively in the hands of Christ, and “roll the responsibility” of their sanctification upon him. What mean, then, the numerous scriptural inculcations upon believers to strive, to run, to wrestle, to fight, to put on the whole armour of God? It is manifest from the inspired volume that we are to come to Christ, not for the purpose of saving ourselves the trouble of a personal warfare, but that we may engage in such a warfare with good motives, with becoming zeal, with persevering energy, and with success. The effect of faith is not drowsiness, but vigilance: not self-satisfied repose, but self-distrust; not slothfulness, but untiring activity. When Christ works in us, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure, it is that sustained, quickened by his power, we may work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. The present is not the first time in which Pelagian self-sufficiency and Antinomian indolence have been found co-inhabitants of the same dwelling, interchangeably occupying one another’s places, and adopting one another’s phraseology. But how are these apparent contradictions to be reconciled? They cannot be; yet, after all, it is not intended by the writers to whom we refer, to ascribe all holiness to divine agency. Their meaning appears to be, that Christ will sanctify us wholly, if we look to him for such a blessing; yet there is no provision in their system to secure the act of looking itself. Man begins to turn, and God completes the sanctification of man. Hence it is affirmed, that, notwithstanding the promises of the new covenant, insuring perfection in this life, comparatively few of the saints do ever become perfect on this side of the grave.

The fact that the saints are, in scripture, sometimes said to be perfect, has been alleged as another argument in favour of Perfectionism.

We answer, that the word perfection is used in different senses. It is sometimes employed to express advancement and maturity in the Christian character and in knowledge, as distinguished from the comparatively low conceptions, weakness, and inconsistencies of mere infants in the divine life. “We speak wisdom among them that are perfect,” that is, the thoroughly instructed. “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.” It is sometimes used to denote evangelical uprightness, or sincere piety, in distinction from an empty profession of godliness. In this sense

of the word, perfection belongs to all real saints. Thus the Psalmist says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Here perfect and upright, agreeably to a well-known rule of Hebrew construction, are evidently synonymous terms. A perfect man, in this place, then, is a man who is sincere in his religious profession, a real friend of God, and an heir of heaven. The wicked are said to "shoot in secret at the perfect," that is, at the regenerated children of God. "For the upright," says Solomon, "shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it." In this passage, too, the terms uprightness and perfection have the same meaning. Noah is said to have been a perfect man; yet the phrase is immediately explained as signifying the reality of his piety, or his humble walk with God. That he was not without the remains of moral corruption, is manifest from a subsequent instance of intoxication with which he is charged in the scriptures. Job is also affirmed to be a perfect man. But that it was not intended to assert his freedom from sin, is apparent from his conduct, which is recorded, for he afterwards cursed the day of his birth. He, also, himself confessed his want of sinless perfection. "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." "If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." In the same sense we are to understand the phrase as used by Hezekiah, when he says, "Remember now, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect," that is, with a sincere "heart." That sinless perfection was not intended, seems evident from what the scriptures tell us concerning his conduct soon after the prayer in which these words are contained. "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up: therefore wrath was upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart." Most clearly, therefore, though he was perfect in the sense of sincere, or truly pious, he was yet far from being sinless. Of several of the kings of Judah, it is said that their heart was perfect with the Lord, yet actions are attributed to them utterly inconsistent with the supposition that they were exempt from all sinful defects. The obvious meaning of the phrase as applied to those good men is, that they were sincere believers, and maintained by their example and public acts, the doctrines, institutions, and laws of true religion in their dominions. It is affirmed of Zacharias and Elizabeth, that "they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." In this passage, it is plainly the design of the inspired writer to teach us that Zacharias and Elizabeth were eminent saints, maintaining an example of impartial and universal obedience. That he did not mean to attribute to them sinless obedience is manifest, because in



the context Zacharias is charged with criminal unbelief, for which he was punished with the temporary loss of the power of speech. What! a perfectly holy man subject himself to the divine displeasure, and struck dumb for his distrust of God's word! Paul calls upon those whom he had addressed as perfect, to be followers of him, Phil. iii. 15, 17; yet, in the same connexion he says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." It is certain, therefore, that, in the one instance, the word has a different meaning from what it has in the other; for it is absurd to suppose that a wise and humble man, who confessed himself to be still imperfect, would exhort those whom he regarded as sinless, to look to him as an example. Some have understood by the perfect, whom Paul addressed, full grown men in Christian knowledge, in distinction from children. Accordingly, Beza translates the passage, "*quotquot itaque adulti sumus, hoc sentiamus.*"

One of the arguments of Mr. Mahan, on which he strongly insists, is expressed in the following terms. "The Bible positively affirms, that provision is made in the Gospel for the attainment of a state of perfection, and that to make such provision is one of the great objects of Christ's redemption."\*

This language is ambiguous in several respects. It may mean, that God has revealed it as his determination, that his people, or some of them, shall become perfect in the present world; and, in this sense, it is but an assumption of the doctrine to be proved. It may mean that God's plan includes the complete sanctification of his children, at some future period of their existence; a fact which no one questions, and which proves nothing with respect to the subject in dispute. God has also made provision for the deliverance of his people from sickness, pain and all afflictions, and for the enjoyment of the Redeemer's presence in glory; but this purpose concerning the elect, is not accomplished till they are released from the present world by death. Does Mr. Mahan mean, that nothing hinders the perfect obedience of Christians but their own culpable abuse, or disregard of their privileges? Very well; and it may with equal truth be said, that nothing different from this, hinders the perfect obedience of impenitent sinners. Does he mean merely that believers might be perfect but for their own fault? It is also true, as the apostle assures us, that the very heathen are without excuse; and the damned themselves are doubtless inexcusably criminal for their present rebellion. Does he mean, that the atonement secures the perfect holiness of Christians in the present life? This is simply a begging of the question; and it is moreover contradicted by fact; since the great body of believers are, by the acknowledgment of Mr. Mahan himself, far from perfect holiness. Does he mean that the Spirit of God is able and gracious enough to make them perfect? So the Spirit of God is able and gracious enough to make the whole world perfect, and

\* Christian Perfection, p. 20.

even to exclude all sin from the universe. But his power and mercy are ever regulated, in their exercise, by his wisdom and his supreme regard to the interests of universal being. The only question, in reference to this subject, is, what is God's revealed purpose? Has he anywhere told us that his people, or a part of them, will become perfectly holy during their abode in this world? If not, the removal of external obstacles to their perfection no more proves that they will be perfect, than God's readiness to receive every true penitent justifies the conclusion, that all mankind will repent and cordially embrace the overtures of the Gospel. The loose manner in which Mr. Mahan expresses himself, makes it difficult to say what he does mean, except that he intends to assert that God has done or will do something that renders it certain a part of his people will grow to a state of perfection, before they exchange earth for heaven. Excellent, therefore, as Dr. Woods's discussion of this subject mainly is, we cannot agree with him in saying, that "devout Christians and orthodox divines have in all ages maintained the same doctrines" with Mr. Mahan, concerning "the provisions of the Gospel." We must know what Mr. Mahan means by the provisions of the Gospel, before we can say anything like this. In all "the practical writings of Calvin, Flavel, Owen, Bunyan, Watts, Doddridge, President Davies, and Good," not a sentence can be found which implies that God has, in such a sense, made provision for the complete sanctification of his children while they "abide in the flesh," that his plan includes this result of his administration towards them; and if Mr. Mahan does not mean so much as this, he means nothing to his purpose.

Mr. Mahan also affirms that "perfection in holiness is promised to the Christian in the new covenant under which he is placed."\*

If it be true that God has promised that his people shall become perfect in this life, the question is settled. But what are the proofs adduced of this fact? Why, he cites a number of passages, which, if they are at all relevant to his design, prove that all Christians become completely holy at the moment of their regeneration. The promises he mentions belong to all under the new covenant. These are contained in such passages as Jer. xxxi. 31-34, and Heb. viii. 8-11; Deut. xxx. 10; Jer. i. 20; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27; Isaiah lix. 21, and Luke i. 74, 75, &c. God circumcises the hearts of all his people; he puts his law in their inward parts; he takes away the stony heart out of their flesh; and he causes them to walk in his statutes. But does Mr. Mahan believe (as he should, in order to be consistent with himself) that all the elect are completely sanctified, at the very instant of their conversion? So far from it he says, "the great men of the church are slumbering in Antinomian death, or struggling in legal bondage, with barely enough of the evangelical spirit to keep the pulse of spiritual life faintly beating."† But does Mr. Mahan believe that the

\* Christian Perfection, p. 22.

† *Ib.*, pp. 100, 101.

promises of the new covenant have failed with respect to "the great mass of the church?" How, then, can he argue from these promises, that any part of the church will be completely sanctified in this life? Again, he says, "from the evangelical simplicity of their first love, they (i. e., the great mass of Christians) fall into a state of legal bondage, and after a fruitless struggle of vain resolutions with the world, the flesh and the devil, they appear to descend into a kind of Antinomian death." "The spirit of Antinomian slumber prevails, and death, not a present Christ, is looked for as the great deliverer from bondage." What does this mean? Has God forgotten his covenant? Or is it simply conditional? But a conditional covenant, from its very nature, does not insure the compliance of a single individual with its proposals. The truth, however, is, that the promises enumerated by Mr. Mahan, have their incipient fulfilment here, and will be accomplished, in the broadest extent of their meaning, hereafter. God, therefore, is faithful, though it remain true, that none are entirely free from sin on this side of heaven.

Some have insisted on those texts, in which God promises to cleanse his people from all sin, as an evidence that they may attain to perfection in this life.

In some instances, to be cleansed from sin, is equivalent to pardon, or gratuitous justification. Thus, in Ps. li.: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin;" that is, save me from the deserved consequences of my disobedience. Again, in allusion to ceremonial purification, which represented atoning blood, David says in the same psalm, "purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Thus, in Jer. xxxiii. 8: "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me." That this refers to justifying grace, rather than sanctification, seems evident from what immediately follows—"and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me." Thus, also, in 1 John i. 7, 8, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," that is, obtaineth our pardon; for it is not the atonement, but a direct divine influence, which removes the power and pollution of sin. Again: "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Here, to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness, appear to be equivalent phrases. In the sense of pardon, or free justification, all believers are cleansed from sin, since they are all acquitted, and viewed and treated as perfectly righteous, for the Redeemer's sake.

Where deliverance from the dominion of sin is promised, reference is in part had to what takes place in this world, but, more especially, to the future perfection of the heavenly state. The purifying process begins in the new birth, and is gradually carried forward in sanctification, till the work is completed in glory. But how does the promise of future entire emancipation from the thral-



dom of sin, prove that this blessing will be obtained immediately, or during the brief term of our earthly existence? It is also promised to believers, that they shall be delivered from all sorrow, that they shall vanquish completely death and hell, and shall live and reign with Christ; and it might as well be argued, that these promises will have their full accomplishment here, as those which relate to the entire purgation of the saints from their moral defilement. The truth is, God's faithfulness peculiarly appears in sustaining his people, amidst the temptations and difficulties connected with a state of sinful imperfection, till death is swallowed up in victory. Every good thing which the Lord has spoken will be shortly accomplished; and is his veracity to be distrusted, because he does not give to his children in this world, the perfect rest and triumph of heaven? Was God unfaithful to his ancient saints, because he did not send them the promised Messiah in the time of Moses? I may remark in general, that if we regard not the scope of a passage, nor the peculiar import of scriptural phrases, nor the analogy of the faith, we may, from insulated texts, deduce doctrines as preposterous as any that were ever advanced by the greatest heretics. Thus from the passage, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," we might argue, in opposition to the repeated declarations and general tenor of the scriptures, that Christ sanctifies or pardons and saves the whole human race. Whereas, the truth intended to be taught in these words, is the reality and universal extent of the atonement of Christ.

"I argue," says Mr. Mahan,\* "that perfection in holiness is attainable in this life, and that the sacred writers intended to teach the doctrine, from the fact, that inspired men made the attainment of this particular state the subject of definite, fervent, and constant prayer."

So we have examples of inspired men, praying for the purity and blessedness of the heavenly state. But do believers, while sojourning on earth, ever literally become companions of the glorified? Paul was continually pressing toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; the acquisition of this prize was the object of his most earnest labours, of his most fervent prayers; and Mr. Mahan supposes† that the "mark" at which the apostle so strenuously aimed was the "resurrection of the dead." But was Paul actually raised from the dead, during the period of his abode in this world? Or, does it follow, because he continued to sigh and groan, being burdened, that he did not pray in faith for a glorious resurrection? Christ taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This prayer was offered by the apostles, and has been offered by the most devoted Christians, in all later ages; yet to this day, much the greater part of mankind continue the slaves of sin, and ignorant of the way of salvation by the Mediator. Are

\* Christian Perfection, p. 34.

† Ib., p. 60.

we to conclude, therefore, that this prayer has been so long, and by such multitudes of the excellent of the earth, offered in vain?

Perfectionists have urged the prayer of Christ, recorded in John xvii. 21, 23, as a proof of their doctrine, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one." "The union here prayed for," says Mr. Mahan, "is a union of perfect love." "We must admit that this love, and consequent union, will exist among believers, or maintain, 1st, That Christ prayed for that which he requires us to believe that it is not for the glory of God to bestow on his children. 2d, That the world are never to believe in Christ."\*

That this prayer was offered in behalf of all God's children, cannot admit of a doubt. But if it was offered for all, it has been answered in part at least, with respect to all, since the supplications of the Son are ever prevalent with the Father. However imperfect Christians may be, they are all united to their head by a living faith, they all have essentially the same views of the Gospel; they approve of one another's character, and rejoice in the prosperity of the kingdom, of which they are all subjects; they all hate sin, and love the same divine objects; they have all been washed in the same blood, have been renewed by the same spirit, have become partakers of the same hope, and have been made heirs of the same salvation. The union among believers, as it is far more pure and sacred than that which subsists among worldly men, is destined to grow in strength, while all earthly friendships decay, and to endure for ever. Nor, apparently defective as it is, has it been wholly ineffectual in carrying a conviction to the ungodly of the divine reality and power of the Gospel. In consequence of the example of Christians, notwithstanding the many inconsistencies with which it has been marred, the "world" have been constrained to admit the divine mission and character of the Redeemer. But Mr. Mahan seems to suppose that this prayer is not answered at all, except with regard to those who become perfectly sanctified in the present life. What must be the inference? Plainly this—that, with respect to the great body of Christians hitherto, during their mortal pilgrimage, the prayer of the Saviour has been followed by no correspondent effect. According to Mr. Mahan's interpretation, therefore, Christ has failed to secure the object which he sought; for this writer supposes that comparatively few of the saints have attained to that perfection, which their master prayed they should possess. But if the prayer has failed of an answer till now, with respect to millions of Christians, what evidence is there that it will not equally fail in all future ages of time? It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude, not that the great intercessor has prayed in vain, but that the Perfectionists have misappre-

hended and misinterpreted his prayer. Our Lord said, "I pray not thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." The word evil may be understood to include both sin and suffering, as well as the temptations and buffetings of Satan. If, therefore, we forget facts, and the general testimony of the scriptures, in our exposition of particular texts, we may infer from this last cited passage, that all real believers have done with conflicts, and enjoy perfect freedom from afflictions and sorrows.

Mr. Mahan thinks that Paul's proposing himself as an example to other Christians, "shows that he had arrived to a state of entire sanctification."\*

Paul does not propose himself as a perfect example. He was worthy of imitation in many respects; and so are many other good men, who would be the last persons on earth to claim the character of entire obedience. That Paul was imperfect, and that after all his attainments he felt himself to be so, will fully appear in the sequel. As for the passages which Mr. Mahan cites to prove the perfection of Paul's obedience, they assert nothing more than the sincerity of his faith, the eminency of his self-denial, and his fidelity as an apostle and minister of Christ. When he declared that he was pure of the blood of all men, he referred merely to the clearness and fulness with which he had preached the Gospel. But can none, save one who is perfectly holy, declare to his hearers all the counsel of God?

Some have considered 1 John iii. 9, as proving that saints may be entirely free from sin in this life. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

It is the opinion of some writers that the apostle here refers to the sin of total and final apostasy, against which all true Christians are secured by the power and presence of God. The connexion, however, seems to warrant the conclusion, that John's object is to exhibit one of the distinguishing evidences of true religion, which is obedience. Some in the primitive church were Antinomians, supposing, with many modern Perfectionists, that Christians were freed from the rule of duty, and were at liberty to live according to their inclinations. To meet this impious dogma, as well as excite believers to the diligent pursuit of holiness, the sacred writer affirms that regeneration implies the implantation of a virtuous "seed," or "principle," which, by its own proper tendency, prompts to all the works of faith and labours of love. The real Christian, therefore, cannot be the committer or doer of sin, in such a sense as implies an habitually and totally depraved character. He longs for perfect holiness, and assiduously strives to keep all the commandments of God. In other words, he is habitually a new man, both in his heart and in the overt actions of his life. The con-

\* Christian Perfection, p. 39.



nexion, both preceding and following the text, accords with this interpretation. The 10th verse is, "In this the children of God are manifested, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Such are the scope and design of the passage. The other interpretation is moreover attended with difficulties not easy to be removed.

1. It overthrows a leading doctrine of the greater part of the Perfectionists (who are Arminians), concerning the defectibility of the saints. Here we learn that regeneration includes the idea of permanency or certain perseverance in obedience, "His seed remaineth in him." Most surely then, Wesleyans and other Arminian Perfectionists ought not to cite this passage as an evidence of their doctrine; since if it proves anything in their favour, it proves too much for their cause.

2. Admit the interpretation of the Perfectionists, and it will follow that none but the perfectly holy had been born of God, or are real Christians. The language of the apostle is very explicit: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." If by not committing sin here, be intended absolute perfection, then the smallest sin, either external or internal, is enough to demonstrate a professor of religion to be a hypocrite. On this ground, therefore, the difference between saints and sinners must be, not in the nature of some or all of their exercises, but the perfection of the former and the imperfection of the latter. The last part of the text is, if possible, stronger than the first; "He cannot sin, because he is born of God." If the meaning be, he cannot sin at all, then of course no one who does sin at all, has within him the smallest spark of true religion.

3. The interpretation adopted by the Perfectionists, makes John contradict himself in this very epistle; for he does expressly affirm that none of the children of men in this world are entirely free from sin. In chap. i. ver. 8, he tells us, "If we say that we have no sin" (as some pretended that all their actions as believers were pure), "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." In the language of the New Testament, the affirmation that the truth is not in one, seems to be the same as saying that he is not a real Christian. Paul speaks of men of "corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth," that is, devoid of the Christian spirit, or of evangelical piety. John, in the second chapter of this epistle, uses the same phrase. "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Elsewhere the same apostle speaks of the truth as being in Christians, as dwelling in them; and them he represents as walkers in the truth. Thus he teaches us that the boast of perfection indicates not superior sanctity, but gross self-ignorance, or intentional falsehood, and a destitution of the genuine traits of the Christian character. In chap. iii. ver. 3, he says, "and every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." Macknight has the fol-

lowing note on this passage. "The apostle, as Beza observes, doth not say, hath purified himself, but purified himself; to show that it is a good man's constant study to purify himself, because no man in this life can attain to perfect purity. By this text, therefore, as well as by 1 John i. 8, those fanatics are condemned who imagine they are able to live without sin." From the foregoing passages, it is apparent that John taught a very different doctrine from that of sinless perfection in this life. And is it credible that he has been guilty of gross self-contradiction in the course of a single brief letter?

It may be said in favour of the doctrine of perfection of the saints in this life, that it is honourable to Christ, and implied in his all-sufficiency as the Saviour of his people. Will he not, it may be asked, be all to his people that they need or desire?

We answer, that he will be all to them that he has promised, but that he will do nothing for them contrary to his own express declarations and the wisdom of his general counsels. We are ill qualified to judge what, except so far as he has revealed his purpose in his word, it is wisest and best for him to do. There are some things which he will not do for his people. He will not, for example, make them all of gigantic stature and Herculean strength; nor render them immortal upon the earth, nor cause them to live to the age of Methuselah, nor raise them at once in intellect and knowledge to an equality with the angels, nor free them, while they continue here, from the universally experienced pains and ills of this mortal existence. To expect from him such achievements, betrays either infidelity or the utmost extravagance of enthusiasm. That he will ultimately accomplish the entire sanctification of his people is certain: this they are bound to believe; but to look to him without any warrant from his word, for such a manifestation of his grace in this world, betokens rather weakness and presumption than suitable confidence in his faithfulness and power. When he assures us that he will do for us whatever we ask, it is with the express or implied condition, that our petitions are in accordance with his purposes as made known in the scriptures. Has he ever told us in the Bible, that he will, if we ask him, purify us from all sin in the present world? If not, it seems opinionated pride and ignorance, rather than eminent faith and holiness, to expect him, out of a regard to our wishes, thus to turn aside from the course of his ordinary gracious operations. Besides, so long as we continue here, we must come to him as needy, as empty, as sinners. But these are not the characteristics of such as are completely sanctified. They have as truly entered into their rest as any of the saints with Christ in Paradise.

"But some have professed to be perfectly holy."

Such were not the saints, of whom we have an account in the scriptures. These all confessed their continual proneness to sin; and depended all their life long on the resources of rich, free, superabounding grace. Some, indeed, have claimed perfection;

but they resembled the Pharisee who thanked the Lord for his moral superiority over other men, much more nearly than the contrite Publican, who smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The church of Rome, too, has claimed infallibility. A man's favourable opinion of himself is but a poor argument to show that he is either good or great. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." "There is," says Solomon, "a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness." It is the self-righteous hypocrite who cries, "stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou." "These," says God, "are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day." Many poor enthusiasts have believed themselves inspired, and capable of working miracles; and some have affirmed their possession of attributes strictly superhuman and divine. Are the Behmenites, the French prophets, the disciples of Ann Lee, and the Mormons, then, to be acknowledged as the divinely illuminated messengers of God? "Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." When a man professes an eminence in holiness, surpassing that ascribed to any of the scripture saints, he is for that reason to be distrusted; and if he boasts of a perfection which the Bible denies to pertain to any of the human race in this world, he is to be at once regarded, without the trouble of further examination, either as a deceiver, or the subject of a morbid fanaticism. It is not for a moment to be deemed possible,—whatever may be his professed experimental knowledge of religion, or his zeal, or the apparent blamelessness of his life,—that he is in the right, in opposition to the explicit declaration of the scriptures. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to the word, it is because there is no light in them." At all events, if one come to us with a professedly new revelation, he is not worthy of attention from us, until we find him performing works which are plainly and incontestably miraculous.

It is, moreover, said by Perfectionists, that the common orthodox doctrine on this subject is discouraging, and leads to licentiousness.

The same objection has been made to the doctrines of entire depravity, regeneration by effectual grace, election, justification by faith alone, the atonement of Christ, and indeed the whole scheme of evangelical truth contained in the Bible. Infidels, too, have professed to reject the sacred volume, on the ground of the alleged evil tendency of many of its narratives, precepts, and exhibitions of divine character. Does it follow then, that the influence of the doctrines of grace is bad, or that the Bible does not give us the most just and consistent view of God? Certainly not.

He who needs the expectation of perfect holiness in this life to stimulate his efforts in religion, is yet a stranger to the ingenuous nature of that faith which is the fruit of divine grace. The true Christian loves holiness, and will, therefore, strive to make ad-



vances in the divine life. Did Baxter, Brainerd, Martyn, and Payson, labour any the less diligently for Christ, because they did not expect perfect rest on this side of heaven? Has any advocate of Perfectionism ever surpassed those holy men in watchfulness, in fervent prayers, in the most self-denying sacrifices, and in unwearied attention to all the demands of duty? The common doctrine concerning the imperfection of the heart of the saints in this world, is adapted to produce and strengthen some very important branches of the Christian character—particularly humility, a great fear of sin, watchfulness against temptation, and habitual active dependence on the teaching and power of the Holy Spirit.” “O,” says the believer, convinced of this truth, “how potent must be my corruptions; and how hopeless, but for Almighty grace, my state!” It teaches, in the most impressive manner, the unwearied faithfulness of the Redeemer, who, inconstant and unworthy as they all are, will never leave one of his ransomed people to perish. How sweet, how tender the gratitude, which such a view of his unceasing care cannot fail to inspire! The doctrine, at the same time, serves to wean the believer from the world, where he is ever to bear the burthen of sin, and dispose him to seek with the most intense desires for the freedom, rest, and blessedness of heaven. It helps to make welcome the grave and eternity. To one who knows the evils of his heart, it is fitted, when clearly understood, to impart a hope which would be otherwise impossible; since it assures him that the struggles he feels within him have been common to others, who now love and adore in the unclouded vision of the Lamb. He is, therefore, animated to press forward in his holy warfare, till he shall drop all the sorrows of his mortal state, and lay down his arms at the side of the grave.

We now proceed to state the more direct evidence of the sinful imperfection of all the saints in this life.

1. The first argument is derived from the direct testimony of the Bible.

Not a single text can be adduced, which, properly understood, attributes perfection to good men in this life. On the contrary, the criminal imperfection of them all is most plainly asserted. Witness Eccl. vii. 20: “For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not.” It is as evident from this passage that no one on earth is perfectly holy, as that any are imperfect. Prov. xx. 9: “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” Mr. Mahan suggests that reference is here had to a man’s past life. The language, however, supposes present imperfection. Should one say, “I have made my heart clean,” the words would imply, not that his heart had always been clean (for that which has never been impure, needs no cleansing), but that he had accomplished his perfect sanctification. To say “I am pure from any sin,” is equivalent to saying, “I am free from that depravity which was once my character.” The passage, then, strongly denies the sinless perfection of any of the human race, in

this world. 1 Kings viii. 46: "There is no man that sinneth not." Mr. Mahan contends that this means simply, that every man is peccable, or liable to sin. If so, the passage supposes that all men here are in a very different state from that of the angels and saints in heaven, who are in no danger of apostatizing from God. Is it not natural, then, to conclude, that there is in the hearts of the saints here, something which peculiarly exposes them to sin? And what can this be but a sinful propensity? Mr. Wesley disposes of the passage in a different manner. "Doubtless," says he, "thus it was in the days of Solomon: yea, and from Solomon to Christ, there was no man that sinned not." But he supposes that the declaration is not applicable to the times of the Gospel. With such as have a suitable reverence for the scriptures, this method of explaining away the text requires no comment. "What," says Eliphaz, the Temanite, "is man that he should be clean, and he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous?" "If I say I am perfect" (or sinless), remarks Job, "it shall also prove me perverse." "How does this declaration," asks Mr. Mahan, "which Job applies to himself and to no other person, prove that all other saints, and Christians even, are imperfect?" It is sufficient to reply, that Job was one of the best men of his own or any other age; that he is celebrated as such in the book of Ezekiel, and that he is proposed to Christians in the New Testament as a model of distinguished patience. "And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man?" And is it not evidence of perverseness in men of far inferior moral attainments, to boast of their perfection? "Who," says the Psalmist, "can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." Here it is intimated that all have errors or faults, from which they need to be purified by the grace of God. The New Testament is no less explicit on this subject than the Old. We need not here adduce the passages already quoted from the first epistle of John, as they must be fresh in the reader's remembrance. James iii. 2: "For in many things we offend all," or are all offended. We can see nothing in the connexion, or in the nature of the thing, which limits this declaration to any particular description of men. The apostle evidently includes himself and his fellow Christians.

2. Many of the exhortations addressed to Christians, and the prayers offered in their behalf, imply that they are not at present completely sanctified. They are required to make advancement in piety. "To grow in grace." But where one is perfect in holiness, he can "grow in grace" only by an increase of his natural capacity. His whole duty is done; and can he do more than his duty? "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience, and to patience, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity." Could such an exhortation, with any propriety, be addressed to one whose obedience,

according to his capacity, was as perfect as that of Gabriel? A large portion of the precepts written to Christians in the New Testament, import the necessity of improvement, of progress in the divine life. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Would this be a suitable prayer in behalf of those already stablished in perfect goodness? "We pray exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith." "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love." "The God of peace sanctify you wholly." "Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight." The prayer for perfect sanctification supposes that the blessing has not already been obtained; as the prayer that sinners may be regenerated, assumes, that they are yet in an unrenewed state. The foregoing passages may serve as a specimen of the prayers of inspired men in behalf of their brethren; and, while they prove the moral imperfection of those for whom they were presented, they give us no reason to conclude that a full answer to them was obtained on this side of the tomb. To infer the contrary would be as unreasonable as to infer that a sincere prayer for the deliverance of believers from all evil, must secure its object perfectly in the present world.

3. It is the duty of all men daily to ask of God the forgiveness of their sins. This is evident from the form of prayer which our Lord taught his disciples, which is given as a general guide to our daily devotions, and which contains in substance the petitions needful for Christians during their whole life. That the prayer, as it respects the subjects which it brings into view, whether the precise form be adopted or not, is designed for daily use, is manifest from one of its petitions. "Give us this day our daily bread." It is then added, "and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." We shall all, therefore, need daily to pray for pardoning mercy. But the daily need of forgiveness supposes the daily commission of sins to be forgiven. The daily prayer implies daily confession of sin. And does Christ require us to confess offences of which we are not guilty? The insertion of this petition among the rest was doubtless intended to remind us of the sinful imperfection of all our services in the present world. Mr. Mahan's evasion of this argument, that it involves the supposition that "the kingdom of God will never come," and that "the Christian will never be in a state in this life in which he will not be subject to injuries from others," is rather confirmatory, than subversive, of the inference I have maintained. Mr. Mahan virtually allows, then, that so long as Christians are "subject to injuries from others," this prayer is suitable for all believers. And are they not still "subject to injuries?" The prayer, therefore, is with propriety used by Christians at this day; and it remains to be



proved, that it will cease to be appropriate to their circumstances so long as the sun and the moon endure.

4. The same doctrine is evident from the history which the Holy Ghost has given us in the scriptures, of the most eminent saints in ancient times. Noah was once intoxicated; Abraham practised dissimulation concerning his wife; Isaac indulged sinful partiality towards Esau; Jacob sometimes indulged criminal distrust; Lot was shamefully overcome by temptation; Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips; Aaron was too accommodating to the sinful wishes of his countrymen, and formed an image for idolatrous worship; David committed crimes for which his holy soul was afterwards humbled in the dust; Solomon's old age was disgraced by his idolatries; Job and Jeremiah impatiently cursed the day of their birth. Shall I speak of the faults of Eli, and Samuel, and Jehoshaphat, and Asa, and Hezekiah, and Josiah? Unpleasant as the recollection of their failings is, it may be profitable to impress upon us the necessity of continual vigilance and prayer. It is important to observe, that to those holy men, the remembrance of their sins was grievous, and the burden of them was intolerable.

Let us look now at the saints of whom we have an account in the New Testament. Not one of them is presented to us with a faultless character. In the little family of Christ we observe the spirit of worldly ambition. We hear the disciples inquiring among themselves, who shall be greatest? they were warm in dispute; and carry their mutual complaints to their meek and compassionate Lord. Who can think of the confidence of Peter, and his subsequent lapse, though so soon followed by his repentance, without exclaiming, "what are the holiest men, unaided and unsustained by the grace of God?" Much as Peter's character afterwards was improved, his sanctification was still imperfect. "But when Peter," who was in that instance too much actuated by motives of carnal policy, "was come to Antioch, I," says Paul, "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Thus, weak in himself, and liable to transgress, was that great apostle, whose very name denotes firmness and constancy. James, and the gentle, affectionate John, actuated by a spirit of revenge, would fain have commanded fire to come down from heaven and consume the Samaritans, who refused to receive their master. Yet Mr. Mahan thinks that John became perfectly holy in this life. Because John was conscious of the sincerity of his obedience, it is inferred that he was free from sin. Paul and Barnabas contended and divided, with a spirit of acrimony, ill-befitting their eminent meekness, self-denial, and devotion to the cause of the Redeemer. Yet, in Mr. Mahan's view, it is at least "doubtful" whether Paul, in that instance, deviated in the smallest degree from perfect holiness. The same writer makes the apostle attest his own perfection in a number of passages, which simply assert the reality of his faith and piety, though he expressly says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; brethren, I count not myself

to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ." In the apostolical epistles to the churches, faults are specified and reproved, which render it certain that the religion of the primitive Christians was by no means such as dreaming Perfectionists claim for themselves. Thus do Bible facts on this subject explain and establish the Bible doctrine.

5. The most holy men mentioned in scripture have confessed, and that in their best frames, their remaining sinfulness. "Against thee, thee only," says David, "have I sinned." "Mine iniquities have gone over my head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me." "Behold I am evil," says Job, "what shall I answer thee?" Nehemiah and Daniel include themselves in their confessions of the sins of their people. Paul again and again renounces all dependence on his own righteousness, and casts himself, without reserve, on the atonement and perfect obedience of the Saviour. These were among the best men that ever lived; and if they felt themselves to be still imperfect, is it not evident that others who regard themselves as purified from all sin, are miserably deceived?

6. The warfare which, the scriptures teach us, exists through life in the bosoms of good men, implies the imperfection of their obedience, or the continuance of evil principles, however mortified and weakened, in their hearts. It is nowhere intimated that any of the saints have arrived at such a state that they have nothing more to do in opposing sin in their hearts. On the contrary, they are all exhorted to continual watchfulness and diligence, lest they be overcome by temptation. "Be sober, be vigilant." It is clearly implied in many exhortations, that Christians will be obliged to fight the good fight of faith till they die. Is it not plain from this, that there will always be sin in them to resist? Would it not be absurd to direct men to fight an enemy already completely vanquished and destroyed? To evade this argument, shall we be told of innocent susceptibilities to sin, which render perpetual resistance necessary? On this principle, as we have already observed, there must be an inward warfare in heaven; since men carry with them their innocent mental susceptibilities into the regions of endless purity. But is there any warfare in that world? Were the saints here perfectly holy, we see no reason why they should be any more troubled with internal conflicts than are the glorified spirits in heaven.

According to the more common interpretation of orthodox divines, the apostle, in Rom. vii., is describing his own experience, and that of every believer in this world. In that chapter he speaks of sin dwelling in him; of willing what he could not perform; of finding a law, that when he would do good, evil was present with him; of delighting in the law of God, after the inward man, and yet seeing another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin in his mem-

bers; and he adds the pathetic exclamation, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He speaks as if two distinct persons within him were contending for the mastery; and he rests all his hope of the final victory of the good principle over its opposite, on the mere grace of the Redeemer. "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." No real difficulty exists from the connexion, in supposing this passage to be descriptive of the Christian experience of Paul himself, and of other true saints. It has been appropriated by the best of men, as most happily expressive of their own views of themselves; while most of the opponents in modern times of its application to true Christians, have also had Arminian or Pelagian notions of the great doctrines of grace. The orthodox interpretation is the most natural, and such as the plain, unlettered Christian, who had no system to support, would be most likely to adopt. Some of the phrases employed express a state of feeling which is never found in a totally depraved sinner. Can such an one truly say, that he allows not the evil which he commits, that he hates what he does, and that he delights in the law of God after the inward man? The Psalmist represents it as one of the characteristics of a good man, that "his delight is in the law of the Lord." "O Lord, how love I thy law!" "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart." As for the confession, "I am carnal, sold under sin," it merely expressed the strong sense which Paul had of the power of indwelling sin, as it was manifested in the effects which he noticed in the following connexion.

In Gal. v. 17, the apostle speaks of an inward spiritual conflict as common to Christians. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." By the flesh here, as is evident from what follows, is intended the corrupt nature, or sinful disposition of mankind. This flesh is affirmed to exist in Christians, and to counteract the impulses of their new or spiritual nature. The combatants being thus in the field, the contest can never be intermitted, till the foe is finally routed and destroyed.

7. The temper, represented in the scriptures as necessary to acceptable prayer, implies, on the part of the offerers, the consciousness of remaining sin. None are permitted to mention their own goodness as the meritorious ground of acceptance. Humility and penitence are indispensable to a right approach to the throne of grace. We read of one who, without any confession of sin, boasted before God of his good deeds; but we are assured by the supreme judge, that this man found no favour with his Maker. Observe Daniel's prayer. After confessing his own sin, as well as the sin of his people, he said, "We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O



Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken and do ; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God ; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name." Observe the prayer of the Psalmist. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant ; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Observe the prayer of Isaiah. "Behold thou art wroth, for we have sinned ; in thy ways is continuance, and we shall be saved. For we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags ; and we all do fade as a leaf ; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee ; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father ; we are the clay, and thou our potter ; and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever ; behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people." Here we see the church relinquishing all confidence in herself, in her strength, in her goodness, taking to herself everlasting shame, and reposing all her hope in the sovereign mercy and gracious covenant of her God. In the spirit of this passage, Jeremiah prays, "Though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake." Of that penitent submission which prostrates the pride of the heart, and all the powers of the soul before the divine Majesty, we are most impressively taught the necessity in the parable of the Publican and Pharisee. He whose prayer was graciously accepted, had no good actions to enumerate, no apology to offer for his transgressions. His only plea was mercy, through the great propitiation provided for the guilty and the lost. The Pharisee, on the other hand, seemed to regard himself as perfect. See the repenting Prodigal. He tells of no good that he has done. He speaks not even of his compunction, his sorrow, his long and painful journey, to regain the parental mansion, and sue for an abused parent's love. No, with shame and weeping, he cries, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son." The current language of the Bible accords with these examples. The Lord fills the poor with good things, but he sends the rich empty away. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute ; he will not despise their prayer." But what have such promises to do with those who believe that they have already attained to perfection ? Are they poor, destitute in their own eyes ? What, they who have only to be thankful for the forgiveness of what is past, and to be satisfied with their present purity and worthiness ? This is pharisaism, this is arrogance, indeed, if anything can deserve the name. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

8. The same doctrine is confirmed by the testimony of those in later times, who have given the best evidence of eminent meekness, humility, and a disinterested consecration of themselves to

the service and cause of God. In the confessions and writings of the great Augustine, the power of indwelling sin is acknowledged with a strength and pungency of expression, which proves the depth of his conviction, and the intenseness of his penitential sorrow. The ardent and intrepid Luther is full of this most humiliating subject, that he may drive the church from every other refuge to the atoning sacrifice and the immaculate righteousness of her Redeemer. Baxter, Owen, Flavel, Charnock, Bates, Howe, Bunyan, and a host of their godly contemporaries, unite in their acknowledgments of the exceeding potency of remaining sin in the hearts of the best of God's people. Who has not observed the strong language of Edwards, Brainerd, and Payson, as they confessed and mourned over the sins that were mixed with, and defiled, their holiest services? John Newton, Winter, Scott, Martyn, and indeed most of those who have seemed eminently spiritual, have been full and constant in expressing their conviction of the criminal imperfection of their best works, the strength of their innate corruptions, and their entire dependence on the power and sovereign grace of God to direct and uphold them. And if these were not real saints, who, in modern times, are entitled to the appellation? Are they, who profess to depend on their good life for acceptance with God, while they oppose, calumniate, and hold up to ridicule the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel? Are those zealots, proud, censorious, and dogmatical, who boast of their perfect deliverance from sin? "By their fruits ye shall know them; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

On this subject the great and good Wilberforce says: "To put the question concerning the natural depravity of man to the severest test; take the best of the human species, the watchful, diligent, self-denying Christian, and let him decide the controversy, and that, not by inferences drawn from the practices of a thoughtless and dissolute world, but by an appeal to his personal experience; go with him to his closet, ask him his opinion of the corruption of the heart, and he will tell you that he is deeply sensible of its power, for that he has learned it from much self-examination and long acquaintance with the workings of his own mind. He will tell you, that every day strengthens this conviction; yea, that hourly he sees fresh reason to deplore his want of simplicity in intention, his infirmity of purpose, his low views, his selfish unworthy desires, his backwardness to set about his duty, his languor and coldness in performing it; that he finds himself obliged continually to confess that he feels within him two opposite principles, and that he cannot do the things that he would. He cries out in the language of the excellent Hooker, 'the little fruit which we have in holiness, it is, God knoweth, corrupt and unsound; we put no confidence at all in it, we challenge nothing in the world for it, we dare not call God to reckoning, as if we had him in our debt books; our continual suit to him is, and must be, to bear with our infirmities, and pardon our offences.'"

9. The Bible teaches us to look for the accomplishment of our perfect conformity to God, as a part of that peculiar and glorious reward which is reserved for a future life. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is." Is not the implication clear and unanswerable, that our moral assimilation to Christ will not be completed till we awake in eternity, and behold him in his unveiled glory ? But, according to the scheme of the Perfectionists, that which makes Heaven most attractive to the pious heart, may be fully enjoyed upon earth ; we may be as sinless, and, according to our capacity, as much conformed to the Redeemer here as are any of the saints in his immediate presence before the throne. Why then should Christians so eagerly, as the Bible represents them do, fix the eyes of their faith and desire on the celestial Paradise ? Why do they so joyfully anticipate the second coming of their victorious Prince and deliverer ? We are assured, that "the spirits of just men made perfect" are collected together in "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Why are we not told that their dwelling-place is upon earth, as well as in the distant country beyond the tomb ?

10. God deals with the best of his people here, as in a state of imperfection. They are subject to the discipline of affliction. The voice of divine providence, as well as of the word to them, is, "arise ye, for this is not your rest ; for it is polluted." It is plainly a doctrine of scripture, that mankind suffer only because they are sinners. Sickness, pain, disappointments, and the other calamities of life, are, in innumerable passages, represented as divine judgments, or expressions of God's righteous displeasure against the wickedness of the world. "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." "There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger ; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin." "For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled." "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins ?" Our blessed Lord was exposed to suffering, in the capacity of our substitute. Had he not acted in this character, his life would have been as happy, as it was innocent and holy. "The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all ;" and, therefore, he was bruised, tortured, and put to death upon the accursed tree. His was a peculiar case, unparalleled in the history of our world ; the result of an expedient of the divine government to save the guilty, in consistency with the demands of righteousness, and the maintenance of the honor of God. The sufferings of no other person are strictly vicarious, or avail to the removal of the divine anger against transgressors.

With respect to Christians, however distinguished by their attainments in piety, afflictions are affirmed to be fatherly chastisements, and proofs of the paternal faithfulness of their covenant



God. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." From this passage it is plain that believers are never visited with the "rod," and with "stripes," except on account of their "transgression" and their "iniquity." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." None of God's children then, in this world, can wholly escape chastisement; and the reason is, they all need correction. "As many as I love," said Christ, "I rebuke and chasten." He told his disciples, that "in the world" they should have tribulation." "We must," said Paul, "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." "For they verily for a few days chastened us, after their own pleasure: but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." The plain doctrine of the apostle here is, that after believers have become fully partakers of the divine holiness, the end designed to be answered by God's chastisement will have been accomplished. The undeniable inference, therefore, is, that then their sufferings will cease. And this is what we should have reason to expect. Is it credible that a wise and merciful parent will inflict needless pain on his own children? Mr. Mahan himself virtually admits the force of this reasoning. "The rod," he says, "properly applied, brings the child into a state in which the rod is no more needed. So of the rod in the hand of our own heavenly Father. Its object is to render us partakers of his holiness. Till this end is accomplished, the rod will be used. When this end is accomplished, it will no longer be needed."\* But we have already seen that all God's people here are, to a greater or less degree, the subjects of affliction. Will Mr. Mahan pretend, that they who claim to be perfect, are less liable than other professors of religion to the common natural evils of this life? If not, their claim, according to the principle allowed by himself, can have no good foundation.

Will it be said, that believers suffer according to general laws? Be it so; but by whom, I ask, were those general laws established, and were they not formed by their author, in view of all the wants which would ever take place under their operation? Besides, who does not know that the scriptures, in numerous instances, ascribe all the calamities which befall creatures, to the sovereign appointment and direct agency of that being, on whom are dependent all the laws of nature, and all the results to which they give birth?

\* Christian Perfection, p. 66.

A few passages to this effect have already been quoted. It is apparent from these, and many other texts, that the hand of God is as much to be acknowledged in the evils we suffer, as in those events that are strictly miraculous, and which occur without the intervention of means or second causes. Since, then, affliction is ordained on account of sin, the perfectly obedient ought to be as exempt from affliction as are any of the saints in heaven. Every bereavement, therefore, that the Perfectionist sustains, every pain he feels, demonstrates the falseness of his creed. Were he what he professes to be, this poor, dying world would be a most unsuitable residence for him; and he would, without doubt, ascend at once to join his kindred in the skies, and swell the shouts of their praise. The entire system of divine providence here proceeds upon the assumption, that the whole human race are so depraved as to need perpetual restraints, and the intermingling of painful inflictions with the attractive influences of mercy.

We have now to show the great practical importance of correct views of this subject.

Some have said, that, if the doctrine we have maintained be true, it is not worthy of being contended for, especially at the risk of peace; and it has been sometimes intimated, that the contrary scheme, though erroneous, may excite Christians more powerfully than the truth would do, to the indefatigable pursuit of holiness. This notion directly contradicts the Bible. There we learn, that believers are sanctified through the truth; and we are urged to "buy the truth and sell it not." No portion of revealed truth can be of little consequence; since we are told, on the best authority, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." The common doctrine here defended, therefore, provided that it be scriptural, cannot be of small importance, in its relation to truth and duty. Nor has it been received as of small importance, by either its enlightened friends, or its enemies. Great stress was laid upon it by Augustine and the reformers; and it has been deemed of vital moment, by the most distinguished later theologians in our own country, and in Europe. While it has been held by the orthodox, it has been strongly opposed by the wildest and most erratic of the opposers of evangelical doctrines. This fact indicates clearly the tendency of the different schemes on this subject. In every well-instructed and well-balanced mind, the scriptural doctrine of the imperfection of good men in this life stands not as an isolated truth, but as an inseparable part of a system of religious belief, experience and practice.

The Perfectionist, if consistent with himself, must have different apprehensions of God, from those which are possessed by the advocates of orthodoxy. Where is the Perfectionist who has clear and correct views of the universality, definiteness, and immutability of the divine purposes? Can an instance be found of such an one, who does not confound the decrees of God with his commands; thus virtually undermining the stability of the divine go-

vernment, and taking away the foundation of our confidence, in the ultimate prevalence of truth and holiness over error and wickedness? Besides, as holiness is the same in all beings, he, who regards himself as perfectly sanctified, must believe that he is, in proportion to his capacity, as pure and as good as his Creator. How far below the representations of the Bible must be such a man's views of the righteousness and moral glory of the adorable Supreme?

Perfectionism explains away, or virtually repeals God's holy and unchangeable law. In some instances, its advocates directly affirm, that the obligations of the law have been abrogated, with respect to all believers; and that Christ has so fulfilled its demands, that his people are not, in any sense, answerable for their delinquencies. They are said to cease from their works, and to "roll the responsibility of their future and eternal obedience upon the everlasting arm."\* In order to maintain the dogma of personal perfection, it is necessary to make it consist in something far short of the consummate virtue required in the word of God. Hence real sins are called weaknesses, frailties, or innocent constitutional temptations. Concupiscence is reduced to the blameless, though, when they become excessive, somewhat dangerous cravings of physical appetite. Supreme self-love is declared to be an essential characteristic of intelligent moral agency, against which there is no law; which is the spring of all virtue as well as of vice, and to which no more blame can be attached than to the pulsations of the heart, or the vibrations of a pendulum. Affections, as such, have no character; they are but the innocent susceptibilities of our nature, and their most violent workings are innocent, except so far as they are produced or modified by a previous deliberate act of the will. In all other cases, they are passive emotions, like the involuntary impressions made upon the brain by the bodily senses. It follows, on this principle, that love to God and hatred of him, are equally indifferent things; and that they become praiseworthy or criminal, solely in consequence of their connection with some previous purpose of the mind. It must hence be inferred, that when God commands us to love him, he does not mean what he says; but that he is to be understood as simply requiring us to do what we can to approve of his character, and yield obedience to his commands. Thus his law, in his high and spiritual import, is frittered down to an accommodation to the taste, or moral inability of mankind. Observe the language of Mr. Finney. "It is objected," says he, "that this doctrine lowers the standard of holiness to a level with our own experience. It is not denied that in some instances this may have been true. Nor can it be denied, that the standard of Christian perfection has been elevated much above the demands of the law in its application to human beings in our present state of existence. It seems to have been forgotten,

\* Literary and Theological Review, vol. i., p. 558.



that the inquiry is, what does the law demand ; not of angels, and what would be entire sanctification in them ; nor of Adam, previously to the fall, when his powers of body and mind were all in a state of perfect health ; not what will the law demand of us in a future state of existence ; not what the law may demand of the church in some future period of its history on earth, when the human constitution, by the universal prevalence of correct and thorough temperance principles, may have acquired its pristine health and powers ; but the question is, what does the law of God require of Christians of the present generation ; of Christians in all respects in our circumstances, with all the ignorance and debility of body and mind which have resulted from intemperance and the abuse of the human constitution through so many generations ?”

“The law levels its claims to us as we are, and a just exposition of it, as I have already said, under all the present circumstances of our being, is indispensable to a right apprehension of what constitutes entire sanctification.”\*

Perfectionism often and directly leads to the most gross, palpable and blasphemous forms of Antinomianism. It has been conjoined with the horrible notion, that to the Christian all actions are alike ; that sin in his case ceases to be sin ; that his doings, however perverse, are not his own, but are the works of Jesus Christ himself, whose will impels his perfect ones in all they think, say and do. Hence some of the Perfectionists have talked of themselves as divine ; as incarnations of the Deity, possessing at once the righteousness, strength and infallibility of the Redeemer. By many, the utility and necessity of all divine ordinances are denied, as fit only for the uninstructed and carnal, who have not yet entered into their rest. In the writings of even the more sober Perfectionists of this day, expressions are found which seem to contain the germ of these extravagant and impious pretensions.

It is scarcely needful to remark, that the belief in Perfectionism cannot stand in connexion with clear scriptural apprehensions of the total moral corruption of unregenerate men. Hence, whatever words the defenders of this scheme have used, they have universally, so far as we know, denied the essential difference, as it respects the spring and nature of their exercises, between saints and impenitent sinners. The governing motive, namely, self-love, or the desire of happiness, however it may vary in its results, is represented to be the same in both classes, or, at the most, any change effected in this respect, is to be attributed simply to the operation of principles, which, though stimulated perhaps by a divine influence, are yet common to both. With such philosophy, to speak of any as totally depraved, is to use words without meaning ; or to adopt a phraseology, fitted to bewilder and mislead those who are incapable of reducing doctrines to their legitimate

\* Oberlin Evangelist, vol. ii., p. 50.

and primary elements. The history of Perfectionism shows, indeed, that most of its advocates have renounced the use of evangelical language on this subject ; and have maintained, either that men are naturally no more inclined to evil than good, or that a portion of the divine moral image has been imparted to the whole human race.

Perfectionism has been commonly, as it is naturally, connected with a want of reverence for the Bible. Mr. Wesley reproves those, who infer from the conduct of the apostles, that some are entirely free from sin in this life, in the following terms : " Will you argue thus, if two of the apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians, in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live ? Nay, God forbid that we should thus speak." Again : " What if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin ? We cannot infer from hence that all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live."\* Thus scripture examples are made to prove nothing against the doctrine of perfection. Mr. Mahan contends that the passages in the Old Testament, which assert the imperfection of good men, ought not to be adduced as evidence that none under the Gospel are perfectly holy. His words are, " Whatever is said of the character of saints, under the old dispensation, cannot be applied to Christians under the new, unless such application was manifestly intended by the sacred writer."† Speaking of the declaration in Eccl. viii. 20 he says, " It was made with reference to men in the state then present, and not with reference to their condition under an entirely new dispensation."† Thus easily does he dispose of passages which contradict his view. Many have supposed the prophets and primitive Christians to have been unenlightened and carnal, compared with themselves. Many Perfectionists have substituted impulses, or the inward light, for the teaching of the word ; and have spoken in disparaging terms of the latter, as compared with the internal illumination, of which they boast. In exemplification of this remark, we might refer the reader to the votaries of ancient Quakerism, Shakerism, and Mystics and Quietists of every description. And no wonder, that they who are perfect, undervalue that volume which condemns their creed, and which was written by men who confessed themselves to be sinners. What ! the perfect condescend to be taught by those who are imperfect ! It is absurd in the extreme. Besides, it is natural to suppose, that they who are perfectly holy, should read the word of God, rather on the tablet of their own minds, than on the perishing pages of a book, printed by human hands. It has accordingly been no uncommon occurrence, for those who imagined themselves to have attained to the highest degree of sanctification, to abandon the reading of the scriptures, and trust to the supposed illapses and

\* Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection, pp. 19, 20.

† Mahan on Christian Perfection, p. 67.

movings of the Spirit within them. And what is this but a species of infidelity, under the guise of a superior sanctity and devotion? "Search the scriptures," says Jesus Christ, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."

We see, then, why it is, that Perfectionism has so generally led to the wildest enthusiasm. Notwithstanding the warnings of some of its more intelligent and sober champions,\* it has been very extensively connected with confidence in impressions, visions, and unaccountable voices, to the practical rejection of that word of truth, light and power, which speaks from heaven. Many of its disciples have professed to be literally inspired; and with the pretext of obeying divine instruction, have committed the most disgraceful excesses.

It is also the parent and the offspring of monkish austerities, inasmuch as it readily and almost necessarily attributes the source of sin to the body, or the animal appetites, which, though not wrong in themselves, will yet become the certain occasion of transgression, unless they be kept in subjection by the strictest regimen, and a kind of unceasing penance. Most of the Romish recluses, who inflicted the severest castigation upon themselves, and endeavoured to drive out sin by voluntary hunger, cold and nakedness, professed by these means to be seeking, or actually enjoying the blessing of unstained purity, and unalloyed communion with God. Some of the Protestant preachers and believers of the doctrine in our own country, seem to be verging towards the same superstition; and to imagine that such abstinence and dietetics as they inculcate, connected with a general reception of their creed, would, in the course of a few generations, almost entirely extirpate sin and its consequences from our world. What less can Mr. Finney mean when he says, "Is it not true, my brethren, that the mind is, in this state of existence, dependent upon the physical organization for all its developments—and that every transgression of physical law tends strongly to a violation of moral law?" Again: "I am now fully convinced, that the flesh has more to do with the backsliding of the church, than either the world or the devil. Every man has a body, and every man's body, in this age of the world, is more or less impaired by intemperance of one kind or another. Almost every person, whether he is aware of it or not, is in a greater or less degree a dyspeptic, and suffering under some form of disease arising out of intemperance. And I would humbly ask, is it understood and proclaimed by ministers, that a person can no more expect healthy manifestations of mind in a fit of dyspepsia than in a fit of intoxication? Is it understood and preached to the

\* Wesley's Plain Account, pp. 119, 120, where are some sound and important remarks on this subject. The Oberlin professors have written against some of these extravagances, yet they maintain opinions which lead to the most pernicious enthusiasm, and their paper, it is said, is read and admired by some of the most fanatical of the Perfectionists in the western country.



church, that every violation of the physical laws of the body, as certainly and as necessarily prevents healthy and holy developments, in proportion to the extent of the infraction of physical law, as does the use of alcohol? I am convinced that the temperance reformation has just begun, and that the total abstinence principle, in regard to a great many other subjects besides alcohol, must prevail before the church can prosper to any considerable extent."\* To such an absurd extreme does this leader of Perfectionism carry his notions respecting the connexion between the body and the soul; and so clearly does he lay down principles of temperance, which are rather Pythagorean, Gnostical, or Papal, than conformable to the precepts and maxims of pure Christianity.

Correct views of this subject are important, on account of their necessary connexion with the great system of truth and duty revealed in the scriptures. A number of errors springing from Perfectionism, as the waters from a fountain, have already been noticed. As a general fact, the Perfectionist is a Pelagian in his views of native depravity, decrees, election, the divine agency in regeneration, and gratuitous justification; and he denounces the doctrines of Paul, according to their plain import, as they are taught in his epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians, as injurious to the interests of holiness, and in the highest degree dishonourable to God. Experience has proved that Perfectionism peculiarly prepares the ground, where it is cultivated and flourishes, for an abundant crop of infidelity, and the most odious forms of delusion and imposture.

As to the practical fruits of this error, may we not be permitted to ask, without subjecting ourselves to the imputation of uncharitableness, do we not see enough of them at Oberlin itself, represented by its admirers as the very focus of all moral light and of holiness, to justify the severest crimination? What mean the constant denunciations against the church, against orthodox and faithful ministers, and against all who dare to resist the dangerous innovations which go forth, like swarms of locusts, from that seat of superficial learning, and of bold, reckless speculation? What mean the complaints which we hear from the West of the disorganizing spirit and conduct of the students and preachers from that seminary; the divisions they have created, and sought to create, in once powerful churches; and the resolutions condemnatory of their proceedings adopted by ecclesiastical bodies formerly believed to be sufficiently favourable to the extraordinary opinions and measures, which have characterized the theological revolution of the last fifteen or twenty years? What mean the violent acts of some of the professedly perfect ones, blindfolding, menacing, and unmercifully beating a youthful offender, accused of attempting to corrupt one of the female members of the school; and that, after

\* Oberlin Evangelist, as quoted in the April number of the Princeton Review, pp. 243, 244.

they had themselves deceived him, and seduced his mind by a feigned correspondence, and other acts of dissimulation, not unworthy of the disciples of Loyola? What mean the published apologies for those disgraceful acts, under the eye, and with the sanction of the fathers of the heresy? What mean the apparent conceit, arrogance, dogmatism, and radicalism of not a few of the ill-instructed young men who are sent out from Oberlin to preach down dead professors of religion, and dead ministers, and orthodox creeds and catechisms, and to proselyte the world to the kind of sanctity taught by the faculty of that institution? But we forbear. It is, we are persuaded, but to know Oberlin thoroughly, to be convinced of the utter falseness of all its pretensions to uncommon spiritual mortification and holiness. Perfectionism, indeed, can never bear a rigid and impartial scrutiny, as to its visible effects, any more than as to the radical principles which produce them. Its grapes, however beautiful in the eye of the distant or cursory spectator, are still the grapes of Sodom; and its clusters are the clusters of Gomorrah. In proportion to the developments which are made, new evidence is afforded that this heresy, however diversified or modified by circumstances, is everywhere the same in its essential features, and in its tendency; arrayed alike against evangelical doctrine and order; fostering fanaticism and spiritual pride; and, whether it nominally acknowledge or reject the ordinances of the Gospel, taking away the grounds which support them, and robbing them of the salutary influence, which in their legitimate use, they are adapted and designed to exert.

It is time to draw these extended remarks to a close.

Reader! the progress of this doctrine, the indifference of many professedly evangelical men with regard to its diffusion, and the disposition manifested by not a few to apologise for its propagation, are indications most unpropitious to the cause of humble, meek, spiritual Christianity. Perfectionism, with whatever professions "of love, tenderness, and devotion," it may be accompanied, is not the progeny of light, but of darkness; and as truly as Universalism or Socinianism, it should be viewed and treated by ministers and churches as a fundamental error. Tending as it does to sap the foundations of all true religion and genuine morality, apostasy to it should be regarded as an evidence either of a peculiar species of monomania, a profound ignorance of the meaning of the terms employed, or of the want of that humility, without which all pretensions to piety are vain.

Be jealous of any system of mental philosophy, the principles of which naturally lead to the adoption of this great error, so contrary to the word of God, and the conscious experience of the most eminent believers. It is worthy of very serious inquiry (if indeed there be any room to doubt on the subject), whether some modern speculations concerning moral agency, and the divine influence in the production of holiness, have not contributed largely

to the existence and progress of the peculiar form of this error; which has within the last few years swept like a simoom over some of the fairest portions of our Zion. Guard with constant vigilance the citadel of truth at its very vestibule.

Christian reader! "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

This subject urges upon you most impressively the duty of an humble walk with God. Is it true, that sin mixes with and pollutes all your doings—your most disinterested charities, your holiest prayers, your most grateful praises? Is it true, that you will daily, hourly, every moment, need a fresh pardon, and the aid of all-conquering grace, till your feet shall stand on the shores of the celestial Canaan, with the harp of God in your hand and the wreath of immortality encircling your brows? The dust then surely becomes you. There lie and confess your sins, and acknowledge the justice of your condemnation, and weep with ingenuous sorrow, and beg for mercy.

Unite with fervent prayer, untiring watchfulness, and diligence. To this your innumerable inward foes, ever ready for the assault, seem continually, vehemently, irresistibly, to urge you. In such a situation, can you sleep? Awake, for the powers of hell are near, and are eagerly pressing on to circumvent and destroy you. "Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Let not the reality of your continual imperfection be your excuse; but rather let it excite you to more ardent exertions to reach the crown of life.

Be satisfied with nothing less than perpetual progress in holiness. You have but commenced the war; there remaineth yet much land to be possessed; go on from victory to victory, till not an inch of the promised territory shall continue in possession of the enemies of your Lord.

Persevere for a few days, and you will gain the perfect purity and bliss after which your glowing heart aspires. No sound of clashing arms, no opposing hosts, are in heaven. Its quietude is never invaded by anxiety or fear. Its holiness is untarnished as its pure light, and enduring as its years. Triumphant termination of conflicts and of wars! Hasten, then, blessed day, so long desired by the holy creation.

Adore the grace and faithfulness of your redeeming God. He has not only forgiven the sins of your unregenerate days, but he has borne with your renewed provocations since your conversion—your ingratitude, your coldness, your worldliness, your self-seeking, your manifold abuses of his love. Nor will he leave unfinished the work which he has begun. He will guide you by his counsel,



and afterwards receive you to glory. Thus will he keep, bless, save, all the armies of the ransomed, to the praise of his glorious grace for ever. What patience, what condescension, what unfainting, boundless love! "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men."

## ESSAY XVIII.

# TRANSUBSTANTIATION.\*

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THE title in the margin would seem to import that the Catechism brought into view, is the work of the Council of Trent; we are informed in the preface by the editor, that this is not the fact; but it has received this denomination from the circumstance that the fathers of this synod made a decree, that such a work should be prepared, and appointed the persons who were judged fit to undertake it. A translation of this decree is prefixed to the volume now under review, in the following words:

“That the faithful may approach the sacraments with greater reverence and devotion, the Holy Synod commands all bishops not only to explain in a manner accommodated to the capacity of the receivers, the nature and use of the sacraments, when they are to be administered by themselves; but also to see that every pastor piously and prudently do the same, in the vernacular language, should it be necessary and convenient. This exposition is to accord with a form prescribed by the Holy Synod for the administration of the sacraments, in a Catechism, *which bishops will take care to have faithfully translated into the vernacular language, and expounded to the people by all pastors.*”

The execution of this work, under the superintendence of the archbishop of Milan, was committed to four persons, three of whom were of the episcopal order. When completed it was presented to Pius the Fifth, and by him handed over for revisal to a congregation, over which presided Cardinal Sirtet, who is here characterised as “profound and judicious.” The style, we are informed, was retouched by the learned Manutius; or, according to others, received its last improvement from the classic pen of Bogianus; and was speedily translated into the languages of Italy, France, Germany, and Poland. It is a book, undoubtedly, on which great pains were bestowed; and it has ever been in high esteem with the Romanists of every class. Whether the English translation here

\* Published in 1834, in review of “The Catechism of the Council of Trent. Published by command of Pope Pius the Fifth; translated into English, by the Rev. J. Donovan, Professor, &c., Royal College, Maynooth.”

presented to the public has been faithfully made from the original, we have no opportunity of judging, as we have not been able to lay our hands upon the original work. The only circumstance which has excited a suspicion that some things have been omitted, is, that a citation which we have met with in a late author, cannot be found in this volume. This may, however, be a mere mistake; we mean not to bring any charge of unfaithfulness against the editor. Upon a careful perusal of this Catechism, candour constrains us to acknowledge that it contains more evangelical truth than we had expected to find; but at the same time it contains the errors of Popery, exhibited without disguise. Our object, in this review, is not to travel over the whole ground of controversy, which would require volumes, instead of a few pages, but to confine our attention to a single point, namely, the doctrine of transubstantiation. On many other points, it is a matter of uncertainty, or at least of dispute, what the Romanists really do hold; but here they avow their belief, and profess to hold all that their opponents have ever charged upon them. Here, then, the parties are fairly at issue; and as this doctrine is considered by them to be fundamental, and as this single error deeply affects their whole system, it will probably answer a better purpose to assault this stronghold, than to run over the long list of errors which have been charged upon that degenerate church. If we should succeed in demolishing this single error, it would go far towards the subversion of their whole system. Our object is to treat this subject calmly and dispassionately, without having recourse to ridicule, sarcasm, or declamation; and much less to abusive epithets. We are of opinion that a controversy with Roman Catholics, as with all other persons, should be conducted with a spirit of meekness and benevolence. Truth needs no poisoned weapons for her defence; truth deprecates such weapons, because they can be successfully wielded by the advocates of error. We feel ourselves bound, however, to strip this monstrous error bare, and hold it up to the view of all reasonable and impartial men as an absurdity which never had among men a parallel. But while we shall endeavour to exhibit this incredible dogma in its true features of deformity, we will carefully avoid using any arguments or illustrations which appear to us fallacious or sophistical. What we principally fear is, that most of our readers will think that we use too many arguments, and dwell too long in the refutation of an opinion which needs only to be distinctly proposed to be rejected as an incredible thing. But let it be considered that this error has struck its roots very deep, and is supported by all the influence of superstition, and by the authority of a power supposed to be infallible. We intend to make no appeal to those termed fathers; not because we believe that a fair construction of all that they have written would be unfavourable to our cause, but because we view them to be erring and fallible men like ourselves, to whose opinions we are under no obligation to submit. Our appeal is to reason and scripture; and in the



light of these, we hope to make it appear, that the doctrine of transubstantiation involves so many gross absurdities, that in order to believe it, a man must first take leave of his reason and common sense.

But let us hear from their own authorized formularies, what their doctrine is. In the Catechism now under review, we have the following explanation :

“The Eucharist becomes a sacrament by the sole consecration of the elements. In the material elements of which the other sacraments are composed, no change takes place ; in baptism, for instance, the water, in confirmation the chrism, lose not in their administration the nature of water and oil, but in the eucharist, that which before consecration was bread and wine, became after consecration really and substantially the body and blood of our Lord.”—P. 197.

Again :

“The Catholic church firmly believes, and openly professes, that in this sacrament, the words of consecration accomplish three things ; First, that the true and real body of Christ, the same that was born of the Virgin, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, is rendered present in the holy eucharist. Secondly, that however repugnant it may appear to the dictates of the senses, no substance of the elements remains in the sacrament. Thirdly, a natural consequence from the two preceding, and one which the words of consecration also express, that the accidents which present themselves to the eyes, or other senses, exist in a wonderful and ineffable manner, without a subject. The accidents of bread and wine we see, but they inhere in no substance, and exist independent of any. The substance of the bread and wine is so changed into the body and blood of our Lord, that they altogether cease to be the substance of bread and wine.”—P. 207.

The decree of the Council of Trent, on this subject, is in the following words :

“Since Christ our Redeemer has said, that that was truly his own body which he offered under the appearance of bread, it has, therefore, always been believed in the church of God, and it is now again declared by this holy Council, that by the consecration of the bread and wine, there is effected a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of Christ our Lord, and the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood, which conversion is fitly termed by the holy Catholic church, transubstantiation.”—*Con. Tred. Sess.*, xiii., c. iv.

Again :

“If any one shall deny, that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there are entertained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ ; or say that he is in it only as a sign or figure, or by his influence, let him be anathema.

“If any one shall say, that in the adorable sacrament of the eucharist, the substance of the bread and wine remains, together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ [referring to the consubstantiation of the Lutherans], and shall deny the wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into his body, and the whole substance of wine into his blood, the appearance only of bread and wine remaining, which conversion the Catholic church most properly calls transubstantiation, let him be anathema.

"If any one shall deny that in the adorable sacrament of the eucharist, a separation being made, the whole Christ is contained in each element or species, in the separate parts of each element or species, let him be anathema.

"This conversion, then, is so effectuated, that the whole substance of the bread and wine is changed, by the power of God, into the whole substance of the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine, into the whole substance of his blood, and this without any change in our Lord himself; he is neither begotten, nor changed, nor increased, but remains entirely and substantially the same."—*Cat. Con. Trent.*, p. 215.

Again :

"Our Lord is not in the sacrament as in a place. The substance of bread is changed into the substance of Christ, not into magnitude or quality." "As then the body of our Lord succeeds to the substance, the body of our Lord is contained whole and entire, under the least particle of the bread."

"We have already proved that the body and blood of our Lord are really and truly contained in the sacrament, therefore, contrary to the physical laws, subsist of themselves, inhering in no subject."

The doctrine of the Romanists by which the laity are restricted. in the participation of the eucharist, to one kind, is also distinctly stated in the Catechism of the Council of Trent.

"The law of the church restricts its administration under both kinds to any but the officiating priest, unless by special permission of the church. Christ, it is true, as has been explained by the Council of Trent, instituted and administered to his apostles, at his last supper, this great sacrament under both kinds, but it does not follow of necessity that by doing so he established a law rendering its administration to the faithful under both kinds imperative."

The reasons assigned for this departure from the example of our Saviour in the original institutions are, 1. That the scriptures often speak of it under one kind. 2. This practice is necessary to avoid accident or indignity. 3. By this means it may always be in readiness for the sick. 4. There are many who cannot bear the taste or smell of wine. 5. In many places wine is extremely scarce. 6. Finally and chiefly, it was so ordered to crush the heresy, which denied that Christ, whole and entire, is contained under either species.

The doctrine of the sacrifice and adoration of the mass, is also explicitly declared.

"The difference between the eucharist as a sacrament and sacrifice, is very great; and is two-fold. As a sacrament, it is perfected by consecration; as a sacrifice, all its efficacy consists in the oblation. When deposited in a tabernacle or borne to the sick, it is a sacrament, not a sacrifice. As a sacrament, it is to the worthy receiver a source of merit; as a sacrifice, it is not only a source of merit, but of satisfaction. It is never offered to any but God."—P. 231.

We have now seen what is the avowed doctrine of the Romanists, respecting the eucharist; in other cases they often complain that their opinions are misrepresented by Protestant writers; but, on this point, there is no such charge. They explicitly profess their

belief in all that has ever been attributed to them. This is one reason why we have selected this particular dogma for the subject of our argument: there is here a fair issue joined, and there is no medium between the absolute truth and falsehood of the opinion which they hold. In the consecration of the bread and wine in the eucharist, these material substances are actually and really, by a stupendous miracle, converted into the flesh and blood of Christ; so that they are no longer bread and wine; although the sensible properties of bread and wine remain, yet these accidents exist without a subject: for what is eaten or drunk is truly the body of Christ, and the substance of the bread and wine no longer exists. This is the doctrine, concerning the meaning of which there is no dispute: nor concerning the name, for the Council of Trent has declared that it is "properly and fitly" called "transubstantiation."

We now beg the earnest and impartial attention of our readers to the following observations.

1. It cannot be denied that there is something very extraordinary in the doctrine of the Romanists. There is nothing in the Bible which has the least analogy to it. In all other cases when miracles were wrought, the appeal was made to the senses of the people: but here we are called upon to believe that a miracle is wrought, when the testimony of the senses is in direct opposition to the fact. A piece of bread, made out of wheaten flour, lies upon the table. It is admitted that it is what it appears to be, bread, and nothing else. But as soon as the priest pronounces the words "*hoc est corpus meum*"—*this is my body*, we are told that the bread is changed, or transubstantiated, into the body of Christ: but after the pronunciation of these words, the substance on the table remains the same, so far as our senses can judge. The appearance is the same to the sight; the weight is the same, if it be tried in a balance; all the chemical properties will be found the same upon analysis; the feeling is the same when handled; and the smell is the same. It is admitted that there is no sensible change; no change of any kind, which we can discern. Now, we say that there is nothing analogous to this in all the hundred of miracles recorded in the Bible. And before it is received as a fact, there must be strong evidence, indeed, if any evidence can be sufficient to produce a rational faith, in direct contradiction to the testimony of all the senses.

2. But, if there is such a change of the bread and wine into the flesh and blood of Christ, why are the properties of the bread and wine left to impose on our senses? What reason can be assigned why the evidence of the miracle, as in all other cases, is not made manifest? The only reason which we have ever heard assigned for this very extraordinary and unique case, is, that it serves to increase the mystery of the sacrament, and renders the faith which receives the truth, more mysterious. This, however, is an explanation which receives not the least countenance from scripture.



God never, in any other recorded case, dealt thus with his people ; but where he works a miracle, he makes it evident to the senses of all who are his witnesses ; and why is there a departure from this rule, here ? If, on the third day after the crucifixion, the body of Christ had remained in the tomb, an apparently lifeless corpse, and the disciples had been informed that, notwithstanding this appearance of death, he was alive and had left the tomb, as he had predicted, it would be an analogous case. But if we were obliged to resort to such an invisible miracle ; and not only invisible, but absolutely contradicted by the senses of all, what a triumph would have been afforded to the enemies of Christ ! and what a theme for ridicule and triumph ! If such had been the case in regard to the resurrection of Christ, his religion would never have survived a single year ; yet it might be said that the mystery would have been greater, and our faith more meritorious. It is a false principle, that God creates mysteries to astound his creatures with their incomprehensible nature, where there is no need of them. All the mysteries of revelation arise from the nature of the subject, or rather from the limited capacity of the human intellect. If a miracle is wrought, why should it not appear to be what it really is ? If that bread is no longer bread, but flesh, why does it not appear to be flesh ? This change of substance, while the properties or accidents remain, has too much the appearance of deception. It is unworthy of the God of truth thus to deal with his creatures. He gave us our senses, and so formed us, that we cannot but credit their testimony ; and to suppose that he would place us in circumstances in which we are required to believe that their information is false, is to subject his creatures to a dilemma in which they must either act absurdly or wickedly. If we believe our own senses, we must be of opinion that that substance on the table is still bread ; but according to the religion of Romanists, thus to believe is a damnable sin ; for this which appears to be bread, is really the flesh of Christ. And why, we ask again, are we subjected to this great difficulty ? Why does not the element manifest its true nature by its properties ? Why does not the miracle appear evidently, as in all other cases ? To these inquiries no satisfactory answer has been given, or can be given.

3. This is not all. The thing proposed to our faith seems to be impossible. Different collections of material elements, forming bodies of various kinds, are distinguished from each other by their properties. Flesh has properties which make it flesh ; and the same is true of bread. Now to assert that flesh has lost all the properties which constituted it flesh, and possesses all the properties which belong to bread, and yet remains flesh and not bread, is a contradiction. It is a thing impossible. It is the same as to say, it ceases to be flesh, and yet is flesh. It has all that which constitutes bread, and yet is not bread. The notion of properties subsisting without a subject, is repugnant to common sense, and involves a manifest contradiction. What is a property or acci-

dent ? It is that which inheres in some subject, and by which it is what it is ; but to talk of properties without a subject, is absolute nonsense. It is an absurdity which never could have gained footing, except in the dark ages, and under the influence of the false philosophy of the schoolmen. We know nothing of essence or substance but by its properties, and when we perceive them to exist, we are, from the constitution of our nature, obliged to believe that the substance is what these properties manifest it to be. But here it will be asked, do you deny the power of the Almighty to uphold accidents where there is no subject ? We answer, that God is not honoured by attributing to him absurdities and contradictions. Omnipotence can perform whatever is an object of power ; but to cause the same thing to be and not to be, at the same time, is not a possible or conceivable thing ; so, to create or uphold properties or accidents without a substance to which they belong, is impossible, because it involves a contradiction, as will appear whenever we attentively consider the import of the terms. For what is a property or accident ? A property, as the word imports, is that which belongs to something ; but if it belongs to nothing, it is no property ; and the same is true of every other term by which qualities are expressed. The very idea of their self-existence without a subject, is contradictory. This block is extended, inert and divisible into parts : these are some of its properties, but can there be such properties created without a subject ; or where the substance is changed, is it possible that the properties can remain unchanged ? We feel mortified to be under the necessity of arguing such a plain matter of common sense ; but our adversaries are pertinacious in regard to this very point ; for unless they can maintain themselves here, the whole fabric of transubstantiation must fall. We must be indulged, therefore, in some further illustrations. Matter and spirit are believed to be essentially distinct, because their invariable properties are not only distinct but incompatible. God could easily change one substance into another, and give to matter the properties of spirit ; but to make no change in the properties of matter, and yet to make it spirit, is impossible, because it attributes to the same substance qualities manifestly incompatible. If this doctrine, however, be true, the substance of a stone might be changed into an intelligent mind, and yet the inertness, solidity, and extension of the stone remain as before. Here is a dark heavy piece of ore ; now, as God can create worlds without any pre-existing material, so he could change this opaque body into a sun or star ; but suppose the question to be, can God transubstantiate this substance into a bright luminous body, and without sensible weight, while it continued to possess all its former properties, of being opaque, heavy, &c. ? Every man of common sense would say, it is impossible for this to be, because it involves a contradiction. But what if it were made an article of faith, that this lumpish stone was now changed into a brilliant star, although, to our senses, it still had all the properties

of stone? Would not every man say, it is absurd to require us to believe in such a proposition? He would say, I am sure it is not so, for I see it to be the very same it was before you say the change in its substance took place. He takes it in his hand, and says, that which I thus handle cannot be a star; a star is a body of vast magnitude, but this is so small that I can grasp it in my hand; a star is a beautiful, luminous body, but this is a dark and unsightly lump of ore. To which, upon the principles of our opponents, it might be replied, you must not, in this case, trust your senses; God is able to change the substance of this stone into a star, and yet all the accidents of the stone may remain as before; and as his word declares that such a change has occurred, you must, on pain of damnation, believe the divine declaration. This is as precisely analogous to the case of transubstantiation, as anything we can imagine. It would not be more unreasonable to insist (nor half as much so), that the stone which you hold in your hand is a brilliant star of the first magnitude, as to believe, that the small wafer of bread which the priest puts in your mouth, is the whole body of Christ; and not merely his flesh and blood, but his "soul and divinity." It would be in vain to allege, that a small lump of matter could not be a star, because the properties of the stone might be said to remain, while the substance was changed; and although to our senses it appeared to be nothing but a stone, yet, under these sensible properties, there lay concealed the substance of a brilliant star. For thus they pertinaciously insist, that although this wafer has, after consecration, all the properties of bread, and this liquid in the chalice has all the sensible properties of wine, which it ever had; yet, by the exertion of divine power, a great miracle is wrought every time the eucharist is celebrated, and the bread and wine are converted into the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. True, it is admitted, that we perceive nothing of flesh; but we must believe that our senses deceive us, and that that which, to our sight and taste and touch and smell, seems to be a thin cake of wheaten bread, is really the flesh and blood of the Son of God.

4. The very action which this doctrine of transubstantiation supposes to be performed by every believing communicant, is one which is shocking to all the unadulterated feelings of human nature. The idea of feasting on human flesh is so abhorrent to our nature, that most people think they would rather perish with hunger, than preserve life by such unnatural food. This natural abhorrence of devouring our own species has for a long time rendered the world exceedingly incredulous about the existence of cannibalism. To the disgrace of our kind, the proof of the fact has become now too strong to admit of any further doubt; but still, when we read the narrative of the shocking feasts of the New Zealanders, it thrills us with horror, and our blood seems to be curdled in our veins. Now, to suppose that God would ordain, that the flesh and blood assumed by his own eternal Son, should be eaten



and drunk daily, and that too as a part of our most solemn worship, is a thing so incredible in itself, that we doubt whether any evidence that can be conceived is sufficient to render it so probable, that, in opposition to this strong instinctive or natural aversion, we should receive it as a truth, and as an essential part of the service which God requires. It is true, our Lord spoke familiarly to the Jews about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, and declared such a manducation of his body as essential to eternal life; but he could not have been here speaking of the eucharist, of which sacrament no intimation had yet been given. And surely Christ could not have discoursed to the Jews about an ordinance of which they could not have had the least idea. His words did, however, contain a prediction of the violent death which he knew he should die, and by which his body would be broken, and his blood poured out. As the Jews called for a sign from heaven, and referred to the bread which their fathers received in the wilderness, Christ took occasion to let them know, that the manna, concerning which they spoke, was a lively type of himself; that he was the true bread which came down from heaven; and to teach the necessity of faith in himself, he insists on the necessity of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, in order to eternal life. As the manna kept the people alive only by being eaten, so a participation, by faith, of his atonement, was necessary to the salvation of men. Often Christ discoursed to the Jews, who were malignantly watching him, in a highly figurative manner; sometimes, that he might lead them on to a conclusion by which they condemned themselves; and at other times in just judgment for their perverseness, "that hearing they might hear and not understand, and seeing they might see and not perceive." The Jews had no idea of what Christ meant by eating his flesh and drinking his blood; and some of them understood his words literally; but they were not agreed in their interpretations of them, for it is written, "The Jews therefore strove among themselves saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Our Lord, knowing their true character, gave them no further explanation, but extended his former declaration, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." When, however, he perceived that they were offended with what he had said, as entertaining some gross and carnal idea of his doctrine, to leave them without excuse, he intimated to them with sufficient plainness, that his language was not to be interpreted according to the literal meaning. "It is," said he, "the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Now after this lucid exposition of the general import of this discourse, for any now to insist upon a literal interpretation, of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man, is to be more blind than the unbelieving Jews; for it is not probable that any of

them were so stupid as to suppose, that Christ meant nothing more by these expressions than a natural manducation of his flesh and blood ; for they knew the law well enough to understand, that all drinking of blood was forbidden, and the reason of the prohibition would apply to human blood with tenfold force. It would be just as reasonable to suppose, because Christ calls himself a shepherd, and speaks of his sheep of different folds, that he actually was engaged in tending a flock of sheep ; yea, that he promised to sheep literally, a kingdom. Or, that he was really a door, or a vine ; or that the Holy Spirit, whom he promised to believers, was “a well of water.” There would be more excuse for having recourse to these words, to prove the fact that Christ’s body must be eaten and his blood drunk, if he had not precluded every gloss of the kind, by asserting that “the flesh profiteth nothing.” As much as to say, if you could literally become partakers of my flesh, that could not profit you ; and again, “The words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” What can this mean, but this, that his words were to be interpreted spiritually ; and that under the figure of eating his flesh and blood, he had represented spiritual blessings, connected with eternal life, which would be procured by his death and sufferings, and be made to nourish unto eternal life all who would believe in his name ?

5. “The flesh profiteth nothing.” There is much in these words deserving our attention ; and which has a direct bearing on this subject. The eating of any flesh can have no effect to invigorate the spiritual life of the soul. Christ’s body, although perfectly free from all the defilements of sin, consisted of particles of matter, otherwise it would not have been a body ; and his body was derived from his mother by the power of the Holy Ghost, by whose operation it was produced, otherwise it would not have been a human body. Some heretics of old, and some enthusiasts of modern times, imagined that Christ did not receive his body from his mother, but that the matter of which it consisted was celestial, and passed through the womb of Mary, as water through a tube ; but all such opinions have ever been rejected by every branch of the catholic church, and by the Romanists as well as others. Now, the body of Christ being material, his flesh formed and configured like the flesh of other human bodies, and his blood also material and of the same qualities as the blood of other men, except that his whole body was uncontaminated with the stain of original or actual sin ; it plainly follows that, however the flesh of such a body might, upon the principles of nutrition, invigorate or sustain the life of the body, it could not possibly, by being carnally eaten, promote the health and purity of the immortal soul. If a man should eat nothing else but the flesh of Christ, and drink nothing else but his blood all his life, it would never improve the moral qualities of the immortal soul. The argument which our Lord uses so forcibly, to prove that that which enters into a man’s stomach cannot defile his soul, is founded on the same principle as the one which

we are now using. Material causes cannot directly affect the mind, either to purify or defile it. We cannot see, therefore, that the mere eating of the flesh of Christ's body, and drinking his material blood, could in itself, *ex opere operato*, have any more effect to produce or increase spiritual life, than the flesh and blood of any other person. We do not deny, however, that God can institute a connexion between external acts and the communication of his grace; and if he had made eating Christ's flesh a means of grace, or the channel through which he communicated spiritual life, this act would stand precisely on the same footing with other ordinances; the efficacy of which depends, not on the act performed, but on the blessing of God, which can give efficacy to that which has none in itself. But is it probable, is it credible, that God would ever institute such an ordinance as this, by which we are bound, on the pain of the loss of salvation, to devour the flesh of the Son of God?

6. Another view of this subject, connected with what has been said, is, if the bread is converted into the flesh of Christ, and is eaten, and enters through the œsophagus into the stomach, and is there subjected to the process of digestion, it is a matter of real and serious difficulty to know what becomes of it. By a miracle it may immediately be carried away before the process of digestion commences, but then it may be asked, what good is effected by eating it? Or it may be digested like other food, and assimilated into the body of the participant; but then the body of every believing communicant would contain as a constituent part of itself the whole body and blood; yea, the soul and divinity of the Son of God. This would be incorporating Christ with his disciples, not by a spiritual and mystical union, but by a gross corporeal and physical union. The remaining alternative, which is, that the body of Christ received into the stomach turns, with other parts of unassimilated food, to corruption, presents an idea so gross, and indeed blasphemous, that we are sure no one would ever think of entertaining it. Now, it may be said in reply, that this is curiously to pry into mysteries which are inscrutable, and that all observations of the kind here made are impious. If so, the whole blame must rest on the doctrine of transubstantiation; for this alone lays the foundation of such remarks. The consequence is inevitable and undeniable, that if the real fleshly body of Christ is taken into the stomach by eating, it must be disposed of in some way. Let the Romanist tell us how—or we will give him a choice of every conceivable hypothesis. Is there anything profane in drawing from an asserted fact, consequences so palpable? We say again, if there is, the fault is not in the inference, but in the principle from which it is derived.

We are aware that the advocate of transubstantiation will answer to all these reasonings, that the doctrine is explicitly taught in the Gospel, and what God has said must be true, however much it may be opposed to our sense and reason. It is, however, a rea-



sonable inquiry, whether the ground assumed for the proof of transubstantiation does not go far to destroy all external evidence of divine revelation. This view of the subject is so forcibly given by Archbishop Tillotson, in his admirable sermon "On Transubstantiation," that we will cite a few paragraphs on this point.

1. "I shall only ask," says the venerable prelate, "whether any man has, or ever had, greater evidence of the truth of any divine revelation, than every man hath of the falsehood of transubstantiation? Infidelity were hardly possible to men, if all men had the same evidence for the Christian religion which they have against transubstantiation; that is, the clear and irresistible evidence of sense. He that can once be brought to contradict or deny his senses, is at an end of certainty; for what can a man be certain of, if he be not certain of what he sees? In some circumstances our senses may deceive us, but no faculty deceives us so little, and so seldom; and when our senses do deceive us, even that error is not to be corrected without the help of our senses.

2. "Supposing this doctrine had been delivered in scripture, in the very same words that it is decreed in the Council of Trent, by what clearer evidence, or stronger argument, could any man prove to me that such words were in the Bible, than I can prove to him that bread and wine are bread and wine still? He could but appeal to my eyes, to prove such words to be in the Bible; and, with the same reason and justice, might I appeal to several of his senses to prove to him that the bread and wine, after consecration, are bread and wine still.

3. "Whether it be reasonable to imagine that God should make that a part of the Christian religion, which shakes the main external evidence and confirmation of the whole? I mean the miracles which were wrought by our Saviour, and his apostles, the assurance whereof did at the first depend on the certainty of sense. For, if the senses of those who say they saw them, were deceived, then there might be no miracles wrought; and, consequently, it may justly be doubted whether that kind of confirmation which God hath given to the Christian religion, would be strong enough to prove it, supposing transubstantiation to be a part of it; because every man hath as great evidence that transubstantiation is false, as he hath that the Christian religion is true. Suppose, then, transubstantiation to be a part of the Christian religion, it must have the same confirmation with the whole, and that is miracles; but of all doctrines in the world, it is peculiarly incapable of being proved by a miracle. For if a miracle were wrought for the proof of it, the very same assurance that any man hath of the truth of the miracle, he hath of the falsehood of the doctrine; that is, the clear evidences of his senses. For that there is a miracle wrought to prove that what he sees in the sacrament, *is not bread, but the body of Christ*, there is only the evidence of sense; and there is the very same evidence to prove, that what he sees in the sacrament *is not the body of Christ, but bread*. So that there would arise a

new controversy, whether a man should rather believe in his senses giving testimony against the doctrine of transubstantiation, or bearing witness to a miracle wrought to confirm that doctrine, there being the very same evidence against the truth of the doctrine, which there is for the truth of the miracle."

But let us come now to the examination of the scriptural evidence, on which this doctrine is supposed to be founded ; and it is all included in one short sentence ; the words of Christ, where he says, "*this is my body.*" Other texts, indeed, are brought in as auxiliaries, but the stress is laid upon this simple declaration. If this can be set aside, all the others will fall of course. Now, let it be well observed, that our Lord says not a word about the transubstantiation of the bread. He never intimates that he was about to work a stupendous miracle, by changing the bread into his own body, of which we might have expected that he would have given some more explicit information. But having taken the Jewish passover with his disciples, after this supper was ended, he took in his hand a piece of the unleavened cake or loaf, which was used on this occasion, and said, "this," that is, this bread, "is my body ;" and having broken it and blessed it, he gave it to his disciples and said, "take, eat, this is my body ; and he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them and said, drink ye all of it ; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." By Luke it is added after the words, "this is my body," "which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me." Likewise, also, the cup after supper, saying, "this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." The account of this transaction, as revealed to Paul, and by him delivered to the Corinthian church, accords fully with the narrative of the evangelists, "That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, this is my body, which is broken for you ; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner, also, he took the cup when he had supped, saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood ; this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." It is undeniable, from all these accounts, that Christ does call the bread his body, and the wine his blood ; the only question is, in what sense are these words to be understood, literally or figuratively ? Did the Lord Jesus intend that his disciples should believe that the piece of bread contained literally his own flesh and blood ? It is admitted, that when he took it up, it was nothing else but bread ; but it is alleged, that at the instant when he said, "this is my body," the substance was changed, and it was no longer bread, but the flesh of our Lord. Now, the mode of speaking by no means corresponds with this idea. "This is my body," does not convey the meaning, that now I change, or transubstantiate this bread into my body. But passing this, we would remark, that if the bread was thus converted into the body of Christ ; and if, as the Catechism teaches, the

whole body and blood was contained in this one piece of bread, then there existed at one and the same time two complete bodies of Christ ; the one the visible living body, for no one will pretend that this did not continue still to be the body of Christ after the consecration. Here then is mystery upon mystery ; one Christ stands, or sits, with a complete living body at the table, and holds in his hand another complete body of Christ ; and when the wine was changed also, as each of the species contains the whole body complete, there must have been three complete bodies of Christ, two of which were eaten by the disciples, but the living visible body was not eaten ; and if Christ partook of the elements which he distributed, as seems to be reasonable to suppose, then he ate his own body, and drank his own blood. We resolved, on entering on this subject, to avoid all ridicule ; and yet we are apprehensive that the bare statement of these things presents a case so truly ludicrous, that we shall be accused of resorting to this unsuitable weapon. We must, however, for the sake of truth, exhibit the doctrine of transubstantiation with all its legitimate absurdities. If some of these are monstrous or ludicrous, it is not our fault ; the blame lies with the doctrine itself, as was before said.

But if these words, "this is my body," must be taken literally, to signify the flesh of Christ, surely, all the other expressions in the same passage, and in relation to the same sacrament, must be interpreted in the same way. Then, when Christ says "this cup," or chalice, as they prefer to call it, "is the New Testament," or New Covenant, "in my blood," we should understand that the vessel in his hand, which contained the wine, was "a testament," or covenant. This, however, is so manifestly absurd, that all will be ready to say, that he meant the wine in the cup, and not the vessel ; but even here we have an expression which cannot be taken literally ; the wine, before or after consecration, can no more be a testament or covenant, than the chalice can be such. Our only reason for bringing forward these absurd interpretations, is to show to what consequences the principle of interpretation which Romanists wish to establish, will lead, even in the explication of the same passage. But this is not the whole, nor the chief objection to this interpretation. Our Lord says, "this is my body which is broken for you—this is my blood which is shed for you." Now, if the word "body" must mean Christ's real flesh, then it must be admitted that the word "broken" must also be so taken ; and it will follow, that Christ's body was already crucified, and his blood poured out for the remission of sins. In fact, therefore, his body was broken and slain before he was fastened to the cross. As the eucharist is a real sacrifice, and there could be no sacrifice without the death of the victim, it is clear that Christ must have been put to death at this time ; and his words, taken literally, express this fact ; for he says, "this is my body which is broken for you—this is my blood which is shed for you." But he was still alive, and his visible and animated body was not broken, and his blood



was not yet shed ; therefore his body was at the same time dead and alive, or rather, that body now produced from the bread was a dead and broken body ; while the former body was alive and sound. But perhaps this idea of a plurality of bodies will be rejected, as no legitimate consequence from the doctrine of transubstantiation ; and it will be alleged, that when the bread and wine are converted into the body and blood of Christ, they are not formed into a separate body, but changed into the same identical body, which before existed, and was born of the Virgin Mary. We are perfectly willing, so far as our argument is concerned, that this should be considered the hypothesis of the advocates of this doctrine. Let it be remembered, then, that at the moment when the change took place in the bread and wine, the body of Christ existed, complete in all its parts ; then if these elements were transmuted into the already existing body, it must have been by substitution or addition, that is, the former body must have been removed or annihilated, and this new body, recently formed, must have assumed its place ; or the former body continuing to exist without change, the new body must have been added to it. The idea of the annihilation or removal of the body, before existing, will be admitted by none ; therefore, the alternative must be adopted. The bread and wine, then, when transubstantiated, passed into the living body of Christ, and became identified with it. To his body received at his incarnation, then, there was now added another recently formed of the bread and wine in the sacrament. But if his original body was perfect in all its parts, where was there room for such an addition ; or what conceivable benefit could arise from such an increase ? When this change took place, either the weight of Christ's body, and the quantity of his blood was increased, or it was not. If the former, what special purpose could such an enlargement answer ? It could certainly add nothing to the efficacy of his sacrifice ; but if the body of Christ was not increased in bulk or weight, by this change, how can it be supposed that any addition of a corporeal kind was made to it ? There is here another difficulty. The disciples ate the bread which had just been converted into the body of Christ ; but if it had immediately become a constituent part of Christ's living body, how could they eat it ? Did they eat the living flesh of Christ's body, and drink the warm blood which was then flowing through his arteries and veins ? But this is not all ; it is asserted in the Catechism now under review, that the body of Christ, of which believers partake in the eucharist, is " the same that was born of the Virgin." Now to us this appears to be a palpable absurdity, a contradiction as clear as can be expressed in words. It is to assert, that that which was not a fact is made to be a fact ; that a substance which was entirely distinct and separate from the Virgin Mary, was that very body which was born of her. The bread and wine before consecration, no one will pretend, was the body of Mary ; when the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the body and

blood of Christ, that act of power by which it is changed, cannot possibly make this to be the identical body born of the Virgin. It would be just as reasonable to assert that God, by an act of omnipotence, could make the child just born to be Adam the first of men. Such suppositions are a disgrace to rational beings ; the tendency of them is to obscure and unsettle all our firmest and clearest perceptions of truth. According to this philosophy, God might cause that which does exist, never to have existed ; and the being which may be brought into existence hereafter, to have had an existence from the beginning of the world. It is only necessary to state such monstrous absurdities ; their falsehood cannot be rendered more evident by reasoning ; for there is nothing with which we can compare them, which could render their falsehood more manifest. To make a substance which, it is acknowledged, formed no part of the body born of the Virgin Mary, to be that identical body, is certainly one of the greatest absurdities of the doctrine of transubstantiation, so fruitful of absurdities ; and it is not an inference of ours, but is explicitly avowed in this authorized formulary.

Having exhibited some of the difficulties and absurdities of the doctrine of transubstantiation, by considering the circumstances which attended the first institution of the sacrament, these will not be diminished by extending our views to the celebration of the eucharist by the priests of the Romish church. Here we find the doctrine of the mass, with all the superstitions and idolatries which accompany it.

The doctrine of the catechism of the Council of Trent, as it is called, not only asserts that the body of Christ in the eucharist is the same as that which was born of the Virgin, but the same as that now glorified in heaven. The apostle Paul, indeed, declares that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven." Christ's body, before entering into heaven, underwent a glorious transformation, to fit it for the heavenly state. There it appears now resplendent with ineffable glory. It is no longer a body of gross particles of flesh and blood, for such a body, though suited to his condition and work upon earth, would be entirely incongruous with the heavenly state. Now that celestial and glorious body is complete, and can neither receive any addition nor diminution. Although, then, bread and wine may by Omnipotence be changed into flesh and blood, and this flesh and blood may be received into the mouths and stomachs of communicants ; yet it cannot be that this flesh and blood should be the identical body of Christ, which is now enthroned in glory. It cannot be, that that heavenly body should be eaten every time the eucharist is celebrated. The idea is so shocking, as well as absurd, that we know not how it could ever have been received by any man in his senses. If the merit of faith rises in proportion to the difficulty and impossibility of the thing to be believed, then is there nothing more meritorious than the faith of Roman Catholics on this point. A hundred thousand

priests throughout the world often celebrate the eucharist at the same hour. In every one of these instances, if the priest only have a right intention, the body of Christ, even his body now glorified in heaven, is produced by the repetition of the form of consecration, "this is my body." Now how this glorified body of the Saviour can be present in a hundred thousand different places at one and the same time, and yet remain complete and unmutilated on the throne of glory in heaven, is a thing not easy to be believed. The Lutherans who adopted the opinion that there was no change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, yet maintained that the real body and blood of Christ were present with these elements, and were received by every communicant, whether in the exercise of faith or not. And when urged in controversy with the reformed, with the consequence, that this rendered it necessary that the body of Christ should exist everywhere, they admitted the inference, and held the ubiquity of Christ's body; but this was to attribute to a finite and created nature one of the attributes of Deity; therefore, they adopted the absurd opinion that, in consequence of the hypostatical union, divine attributes were actually communicated to the human nature of Christ. But another stubborn difficulty attended this hypothesis. It is the property of all bodies to exclude all other bodies from the space which they occupy; hence, if ubiquity be ascribed to Christ's body, it will exclude all other bodies from the universe. There was no method of obviating this objection, but by giving a new definition of a body; and here was opened a field for abstruse speculation which occupied the learning and labours of men of the first order of intellect; and when they had completed their theory, it was impossible to say what was essential to body, or in what respect they who held a bodily presence of Christ differed from those who maintained that he was really but spiritually present.

How far the Lutherans still adhere to the old doctrine, we cannot certainly say, but we are inclined to believe, that the doctrine of consubstantiation, or *impanation*, as some of their theologians choose to express it, is not at present held with a very firm grasp by the existing Lutheran church; and yet they will not be forward to renounce a dogma to which Luther clung with invincible pertinacity, and which was originally the only point of distinction between the followers of the German and Swiss reformer. The doctrine of the ubiquity, or omnipresence of Christ's body, seems to follow as certainly from the Roman Catholic as the Lutheran doctrine; but, as far as we know, this consequence has never been admitted by Popish writers; they have even impugned with severity the absurd doctrine of ubiquity. They resort to another principle of explanation, which is, that Christ by his divine power can render his body present whenever and wherever the eucharist is celebrated; but, while they shun one absurdity, they fall into another fully as incredible. For though they do not believe in the omnipresence of the body of Christ, yet they are forced to admit



that it may exist in many different and distant places at one and the same time. It exists in heaven and upon earth at once, and in as many places on earth as the mass is celebrated. It becomes necessary, therefore, for them as well as the Lutherans to resort to subtle and abstruse definitions and distinctions, in regard to matter and space, to free their doctrine from absurdity; and just so far as they succeed in clearing away the difficulties from the subject, it is by removing the idea of the palpable presence of solid resisting matter, and giving such views as render it difficult to understand what they mean by bodily presence; or to see how it differs from the real, spiritual presence maintained by Calvin and his followers.

The doctrine of transubstantiation, absurd as it is, is not in itself so dangerous and impious as the sacrifice of the mass which naturally comes out of it. The inference is fairly deduced that if the bread and wine, after consecration, be the real body and blood of Christ; and if his soul and divinity, as they teach, be also present in these elements; then are they proper objects of worship. Accordingly, they are elevated in imitation of Christ's being lifted up on the cross, and they are carried in procession that all the people may worship them. But if this be the real body of Christ, broken for us, then as often as it is created it may be offered as an expiatory sacrifice to God for the living and the dead; and as this oblation of Christ is the most important part of the whole transaction, it is often repeated when there is no participation of the consecrated elements by the people; and thus private masses are encouraged and performed, especially for the relief of those who are supposed to be suffering the pains of purgatory.

That we may exhibit fairly this doctrine of the mass, we will give some account of it from works of acknowledged authority among the Romanists. Dr. Challoner, in his *Catholic Christian Instructed*, p. 74, c. vi., asks:

"What do you mean by the mass?" and among other things answers, "The mass consists in the consecration of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and the offering up of the same body and blood to God by the ministry of the priests, for a perpetual memorial of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, and a continuation of the same to the end of the world.

"Is the mass properly a sacrifice? Yes, it is.

"What do you mean by a sacrifice? A sacrifice, properly so called, is an oblation or offering of some sensible thing, made to God by a lawful minister.

"How then is the mass a sacrifice? Because it is an oblation of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, offered, under the outward and sensible signs of bread and wine, to God, by the ministry of the priests of the church, lawfully consecrated and empowered by Christ; and this oblation is accompanied with a real change and destruction of the bread and wine, by the conversion of them into the body and blood of Christ, &c.

"Is the sacrifice of the cross and that of the eucharist the same sacrifice, or two distinct sacrifices?

"It is the same sacrifice: because the victim is the self-same Jesus Christ; it was He that offered himself upon the cross; it is He that offers himself upon the altar. The only difference is in the manner of the offering; because, in the sacrifice of the cross, Christ really died, and therefore that was a bloody sacrifice;

in the sacrifice of the altar he only dies mystically, inasmuch as his death is represented in the consecrating apart the bread and wine, to denote the shedding of his sacred blood from his body, at the time of his death."

Now this whole doctrine of the mass is without the slightest evidence from the New Testament. There is, in fact, under this dispensation no other priest but Christ: no other is ever mentioned; and the ministers, teachers, and governors of the church are not invested with any sacerdotal office.

This notion of a repeated oblation of the body and blood of Christ is not only unauthorized by scripture, but is in direct violation of what Paul testifies in the epistle to the Hebrews, "For by *one offering* he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now *once* in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did *once*, when he offered up himself." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."

Now what Dr. Challoner says, in answer to the arguments of such texts, is nothing to the purpose. He alleges that Christ's offering on the cross is not injured by his prayers and intercessions continually offered up; which is true, but wide of the mark. It furnishes no proof that there was need for his body and blood to be offered up often. Again: he says, "Though the price of our redemption was to be paid but once, yet the fruit of it was to be daily applied to our souls, by those means of grace which Christ has left in his church, that is, by his sacraments and sacrifice." All this is very correct, except the last word, which stands directly opposed to all Paul's declarations, that the offering of Christ was made but once. The application of the merits of Christ's sacrifice does not require that it should be continually renewed. This renders his sacrifice on the cross insufficient, like the sacrifice of the priests under the Levitical law; for if the one sacrifice was complete and satisfactory, why repeat the oblation continually? He speaks of this, as an "unbloody sacrifice;" but how is it unbloody, when the real blood of Christ is on the altar, as much as it was on the cross? This doctrine of the mass is, therefore, unscriptural, and highly derogatory to the one sacrifice of Christ; besides which the scriptures of the New Testament acknowledge no other; for if other expiatory oblations are requisite, call them bloody or unbloody, then was this offering of Christ imperfect. All that this author says in favour of such a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ is irrelevant; and, if admitted, does not prove the truth of the doctrine which he maintains.

The doctrine of the mass, as laid down in the Catechism under review, is,

"That the holy sacrifice of the mass is not only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross ; but also a sacrifice of propitiation, by which God is appeased and rendered propitious." "If, therefore, with pure hearts and a lively faith, and with a sincere sorrow for past transgressions, we offer in sacrifice this most holy victim, we shall, no doubt, receive from the Lord, 'mercy and grace' in seasonable aid. So acceptable to God is the sweet odour of this sacrifice, that through its oblation he pardons our sins, bestowing on us the gifts of grace and repentance." "Its benefits extend not only to the communicant, but also to all the faithful, whether living or numbered among those who have died in the Lord."

Transubstantiation is not merely chargeable with bringing Christianity into disgrace by its palpable absurdities, but has given rise to gross idolatry. No sooner has the officiating priest pronounced the words of consecration over the bread, than it becomes, as the body of Christ, an object of worship, just as truly as if Christ should descend from heaven and appear before us in all the glory of his exaltation. But here we are met by a perplexing difficulty, which no ingenuity can resolve. It is admitted that no change takes place in the bread unless the priest consecrates with a right intention, and unless he is a regularly ordained minister. Before the people worship the host, as it is called, there should be some method of ascertaining whether indeed the bread had been actually converted into the body and blood of Christ ; for if, on either of the accounts mentioned, the transubstantiation should not have taken place, they are offering their supreme worship to a piece of bread. As we cannot know the hearts of priests, and as we cannot tell there may not have been some canonical defect in their succession or inordination, we never, in any case, can be sure that we are not guilty of idolatry. Nothing can be learned from an examination of the elements ; for these remain the same, so far as our senses can judge, whether the miraculous conversion takes place or not. The wafer, as soon as consecrated, becomes a proper object of worship ; and, as has been before mentioned, is carried about with much pomp and ceremony, elevated on high, that all the people may get a sight of it, and join in the worship ; and, in countries completely under Popish dominion, all are forced to kneel down in token of adoration, as the pageant passes.

Moreover, the consecrated wafer, whether used or not, is the real body of Christ, and may be laid up in a pyxis or box, to be adored, or to be eaten, as the case may be. Now suppose it should become mouldy, or should be devoured by mice, or worms, what are we to think ? Or suppose before consecration arsenic should accidentally, or by design, be mixed with the flour of which the bread is made, and should be consecrated as a constituent part of the bread, does that also become a part of the body of our Lord ? Or would this bread, after being changed into the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus, affect the health of the communicant ? If it be said, that the accidents or sensible qualities do not belong to the



body of Christ, then is there no use in eating the bread or drinking the wine ; for in the process of manducation or digestion, nothing else but these accidents or sensible qualities comes at all in contact with the body. We cannot feel, or taste, or chew, or swallow, that which has no solidity, no taste, no material quality whatever. If then these sensible properties are not the properties of the body of Christ, then the communicant cannot be said to eat his flesh and drink his blood ; for that which he sees is no visible part of the body of Christ, that which he feels is no palpable part of that body ; so, likewise, that which he tastes and smells is not Christ's body : for these sensible qualities exist without any subject. But as eating and drinking are corporeal acts, they can only be exercised on that which has material qualities ; that is, the food which is eaten must have some solidity or extension, for if these accidents are taken away from a substance, it can no more be eaten than an immaterial spirit can be eaten. Upon the admitted theory of the Roman Catholic, Christ's body, after all, is not eaten ; but only those properties, which, though real, have no subsistence. In fact, the partaker of the eucharist, according to the hypothesis of Romanists, cannot be said to eat the bread or the body of Christ ; for he cannot properly be said to eat mere accidents or qualities, without a substance ; nor is it possible to conceive that a body which has no material qualities can be eaten.

Mr. Mc'Gavin, in his "Protestant," tells a pleasant, and not inappropriate story.

"A Protestant lady entered the matrimonial state with a Roman Catholic gentleman, on condition he should never use any attempts to induce her to embrace his religion. He employed the Romish priest, however, who often visited the family, to use his influence to instil his notions into her mind ; but she remained unmoved, particularly on the doctrine of transubstantiation. At length the husband fell ill, and during his affliction was recommended by the priest to receive the holy sacrament. The wife was requested to prepare the bread and wine for the solemnity ; she did so, and on presenting them to the priest, said, 'This, sir, you wish me to understand, will be changed into the real body and blood of Christ, after you have consecrated them.' 'Most certainly,' he replied. 'Then, sir,' she rejoined, 'it will not be possible for them to do any harm to the worthy partakers ; for, says our Lord, "my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed," and, "he that eateth me shall live by me."' 'Assuredly,' answered the priest, 'they can do no harm to the worthy receivers, but must communicate good.' The ceremony was proceeded in, and the bread and wine were consecrated ; the priest was about to take and eat the bread ; but the lady begged pardon for interrupting him and said, 'I mixed a little arsenic with the bread, sir, but as it is now changed into the real body of Christ, it cannot of course do *you* any harm.' The faith of the priest was not strong enough to induce him to eat it. Confused, ashamed, and irritated, he left the

house, and never more ventured to enforce on the lady the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation.' Whether this anecdote be literally true," says Mr. McGavin, "is of little importance to the argument. It may be said very fairly to put any Papist to the test as to his belief of transubstantiation. If the priest's pronouncing the words of consecration should have the power of expelling the arsenic, as well as the flour and water, from the consecrated wafer, I will acknowledge a miracle."

We presume that the advocates of transubstantiation would say, in reply to the above, that notwithstanding that the substance of the bread is changed into the real body of Christ, the accidents or sensible properties remain precisely what they were before consecration; and, therefore, the wafer not only retains the appearance, smell, and taste of bread, but also the nourishing qualities of wheaten bread. And so of the wine; no one, we presume, would pretend that a large quantity of strong wine, after consecration, would not intoxicate. Its being mixed with water, is doubtless intended to guard against any effect of this kind. And so they would admit, we suppose, that arsenic in the wafer would retain its poisonous quality; and, therefore, if a priest, or any other communicant, should be actually deprived of life by such a wafer, it would not prove that the *substance* is not converted into the body of Christ. We do not know how else this case could be disposed of. But still the explanation does not remove the difficulty. We would like to see a logical answer to the following plain syllogism:

That which has no substance cannot injure any one:

But the transubstantiated bread has no substance as bread,

Therefore, the bread when consecrated, though filled with arsenic, cannot hurt any one.

Or the following,

Mere accidents or properties which have no substance, cannot operate efficiently on the body,

But the sensible qualities of the bread, after consecration, exist without any subject. *Ergo.*

Now the only possible escape from this conclusion must be by denying that these accidents of bread and wine can affect the body, which they will not assert; or that that which has no existence as a body, can, nevertheless, operate as a body, and produce effects on the body to nourish, to intoxicate, or to pain. Let the Romanist extricate himself if he can from this dilemma. To us it appears impossible. And this comes of holding that accidents may exist without a subject.

Now, after an impartial view of all the difficulties and absurdities which cluster round this strange doctrine, we cannot but wonder that multitudes should be found to hold to it, or think that they believe it; for we are fully persuaded, that in most cases the true nature of the proposition to be believed is not brought distinctly

before the mind. The imagination, under the influence of superstitious dread, overpowers the dictates of reason, and, indeed, all nice scrutiny into the subject is discouraged and forbidden; and even the priests are cautioned against attempts at explanation. The language of the Catechism under review is, "to explain this mystery in a proper manner is extremely difficult. On the manner of this admirable conversion, the pastor, however, will endeavour to instruct those who are more advanced in the knowledge and contemplation of divine things: those who are yet weak may, it were to be apprehended, be overwhelmed by its greatness. This conversion is so effectuated, that the whole substance of the bread and wine is changed by the power of God, into the whole substance of the body of Christ, and this without any change in our Lord himself." No wonder that apprehensions should be entertained that such a doctrine might overwhelm the mind of the novice. Bread and wine are changed into the real body of Christ, and yet his body undergoes no change whatever! Again: "But according to the admonition so frequently repeated by the Holy Fathers, the faithful are to be admonished against the danger of gratifying a prurient curiosity, by searching into the manner in which this change is effected. It mocks the power of conception, nor can we find any example of it in natural transmutations, nor even in the wide range of creation. The change itself is the object, not of our comprehension, but of our humble faith; and the manner of the change forbids the temerity of a too curious inquiry. The same salutary caution should be observed by the pastor, with regard to the mysterious manner in which the body of our Lord is contained whole and entire under every particle of the bread. Such inscrutable mysteries should scarcely ever become matter of disquisition." (Pp. 215, 216.) No wonder that they discourage all disquisition on such a subject. The last sentence quoted sets all reason and common sense at defiance. Suppose a loaf of bread to be consecrated; and we know that such a loaf is capable of a continued division until the parts become too small for the cognizance of our senses, and too numerous for arithmetical notation, then what is it that the Romanist believes? That every one of these particles is the whole body of Jesus Christ! On the absurdity of thus multiplying the body of Christ, we have remarked before; we now bring up the subject to show the folly of insisting on a literal interpretation of the words of Christ, when every difficulty is avoided by interpreting them figuratively; for which we have hundreds of analogous cases in the holy scriptures, which abound in bold and striking figures, which, if they should all be taken literally, would turn the Bible into a jargon of nonsense; and we have shown that, in this very passage, we are forced to adopt this mode of interpretation.

And after all, what is the benefit expected from this doctrine? Material flesh and blood cannot affect the soul; but truly, according to the hypothesis of the Romanists, it is only the essence or



hidden substance of Christ's body which is present ; the gross sensible qualities of flesh and blood are not there ; now in what respect does such a presence of the body differ from a spiritual presence ; and such an eating of the body from a spiritual eating ? And as to the daily mass or oblation, it can do no good—the sacrifice of Christ once offered on the cross, is ever before the throne, and needs no new oblation. All we need is, that the exalted Saviour and Prince of life should, on the ground of it, intercede for us ; and that we should exercise a lively faith in the efficacy of his atonement, to aid us in which the eucharist is an appointed and powerful means.

Almost the only reply to which Romanists resort in their attempt to obviate the objections which Protestants make to the doctrine of transubstantiation, is to adduce the doctrines of the Trinity and incarnation, as equally contrary to our reason, and equally incomprehensible. But truly there is scarcely any analogy between the cases. There are, in these doctrines of scripture, we acknowledge, high mysteries, which greatly transcend our powers of comprehension ; but there is nothing which contradicts our senses, or is repugnant to the plain dictates of reason, If this could be proved, which we are aware has often been attempted by rationalists, we should feel constrained to give up these doctrines as untenable ; or rather to give up the scriptures in which they are so plainly revealed. But as Archbishop Tillotson has handled this subject very perspicuously, we beg leave here to conclude this review, by citing a few passages from his discourse “concerning the unity of the divine nature.”

“Before I leave this argument, I cannot but take notice of one thing which they of the church of Rome are perpetually objecting to us upon this occasion. And it is this, that by the same reason that we believe the doctrine of the trinity, we may and must receive that of transubstantiation. God forbid : because of all the doctrines that ever were in any religion, this of transubstantiation is certainly the most abominably absurd.

“However, this objection plainly shows how fondly and obstinately they are addicted to their own errors, how misshapen and monstrous soever ; inasmuch, that rather than the dictates of their church, how absurd soever, should be called in question, they will question the truth even of Christianity itself ; and if we will not take in transubstantiation, and admit it to be a necessary article of the Christian faith, they grow so sullen and desperate that they matter not what becomes of all the rest. And rather than not have their will of us in that which is controverted, they will give us that which by their own confession is an undoubted article of the Christian faith, and not controverted on either side ; except only by the Socinians, who yet are hearty enemies to transubstantiation, and have exposed the absurdity of it with great advantage.

“But I shall endeavour to return a more particular answer to this objection, and such a one as I hope will satisfy every considerate and unprejudiced mind, that after all this confidence and swaggering of theirs, there is by no means equal reason either for the receiving or for the rejecting of these two doctrines of the trinity and transubstantiation.

“1st. There is not equal reason for the belief of these two doctrines. This objection, if it be of any force, must suppose that there is equal evidence and proof from scripture for these two doctrines. But this we utterly deny, and with

great reason ; because it is no more evident from the words of scripture, that the sacramental bread is substantially changed into Christ's natural body by virtue of those words, '*This is my body*,' than it is, that Christ is substantially changed into a natural vine by virtue of those words, '*I am the true vine*, John xv. 1 ; or than the rock in the wilderness, of which the Israelites drank, was substantially changed into the person of Christ, because it is expressly said, '*that rock was Christ*;' or than that the Christian church is substantially changed into the natural body of Christ, because it is in express terms said of the church that it is his body.—Eph. i. 23.

"But besides this, several of their most learned writers have freely acknowledged that transubstantiation can neither be directly proved, nor necessarily concluded from scripture. But this the writers of the Christian church did never acknowledge concerning the trinity, and the divinity of Christ ; but have always appealed to the clear and undeniable testimonies of scripture for the proof of these doctrines. And then the whole force of the objection amounts to this, that if I am bound to believe what I am sure God says, though I cannot comprehend it ; then I am bound by the same reason to believe the greatest absurdity in the world, though I have no manner of assurance of any divine revelation concerning it. And if this be their meaning, though we understand not transubstantiation, yet we very well understand what they would have, but cannot grant it ; because there is not equal reason to believe two things, for one of which there is good proof, and for the other no proof at all.

"2d. Neither is there equal reason for the rejecting of these two doctrines. This the objection supposes, which yet cannot be supposed but upon one or both of these two grounds : Either because these two doctrines are equally *incomprehensible*, or because they are equally loaded with *absurdities* and *contradictions*.

"The first is no good ground of rejecting any doctrine, merely because it is *incomprehensible*, as I have abundantly showed already. But besides this, there is a wide difference between plain matters of sense, and mysteries concerning God ; and it does by no means follow, that, if a man do once deny anything concerning God which he cannot comprehend, he hath no reason afterwards to believe what he himself sees. This is a most unreasonable and destructive way of arguing, because it strikes at the foundation of all certainty, and sets every man at liberty to deny the most plain and evident truths of Christianity, if he may not be humoured in having the absurdest things in the world admitted for true. The next step will be to persuade us, that we may as well deny the being of God because his nature is *incomprehensible* by our *reason*, as deny transubstantiation because it *evidently contradicts our senses*.

"2d. Nor are these two doctrines loaded with the like absurdities and contradictions : so far from this, that the doctrine of the trinity, as it is delivered in the scriptures, and hath already been explained, hath no absurdity or contradiction either involved in it, or necessarily consequent upon it. But the doctrine of transubstantiation is big with all imaginable absurdity and contradiction. And their own schoolmen have sufficiently exposed it ; especially Scotus, and he designed to do so, as any man that attentively reads him may plainly discover : for in his disputation about it, he treats this doctrine with the greatest contempt, as a new invention of the Council of Lateran under Pope Innocent III. To the decree of which council concerning it, he seems to pay a formal submission, but really derides it as contrary to the common sense and reason of mankind, and not at all supported by scripture ; as any one may easily discern that will carefully consider his manner of handling it, and the result of his whole disputation about it.

"And now suppose there were some appearance of absurdity and contradiction in the doctrine of the trinity as it is delivered in scripture, must we therefore believe a doctrine which is not at all revealed in scripture, and which hath certainly in it all the absurdities in the world, and all the contradictions to sense and reason ; and which once admitted, doth at once destroy all certainty ? Yes, say they, why not ? since we of the church of Rome are satisfied that this doctrine is revealed in scripture ; or if it be not, is defined by the church, which is every whit as good. But is this equal, to demand of us the belief of a thing which hath

always been controverted, not only between us and them, but even among themselves, at least till the Council of Trent? And this upon such unreasonable terms, that we must either yield this point to them or else renounce a doctrine agreed on both sides to be revealed in scripture.

“To show the unreasonableness of this proceeding, let us suppose a priest of the church of Rome pressing a Jew or Turk to the belief of transubstantiation, and because one kindness deserves another, the Jew or Turk should demand of him the belief of all the fables in the Talmud, or in the Alcoran; since none of these, nor indeed all of them together, are near so absurd as transubstantiation: Would not this be much more reasonable and equal than what they demand of us? Since no absurdity, how monstrous and big soever, can be thought of, which may not enter into an understanding in which a breach hath been already made, wide enough to admit transubstantiation. The priests of Baal did not half so much deserve to be exposed by the prophet for their superstition and folly, as the priests of the church of Rome do for this senseless and stupid doctrine of theirs with a hard name. I shall only add this one thing more, that if this doctrine were possible to be true, and clearly proved to be so, yet it would be evidently useless and to no purpose. For it pretends to change the substance of one thing into the substance of another thing that is already, and before this change is pretended to be made. But to what purpose? Not to make the body of Christ, for that was already in being, and the substance of the bread is lost, nothing of it remaineth but accidents, which are good for nothing, and indeed are nothing when the substance is destroyed.”



## ESSAY XIX.

### SUNDAY MAILS.\*

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WE have frequently been struck, in reading the numbers of the National Gazette, with the justness and weight of its editorial remarks on the responsibility of the conductors of the periodical press. And we have often sympathized with its accomplished editor, on observing the severity with which he has been treated by party prints, for endeavouring to conduct a paper on national principles, abstaining equally from indiscriminate commendation and abuse. We readily yield the tribute which is due to him, for the elevated stand which he has proposed to himself, and think that, as far as politics are concerned, it has been successfully maintained. As it is universally understood that the editorial departments of the Gazette and of the American Quarterly Review are filled by the same individual, we had hoped that the moderation and fairness which mark the political character of the former, would also have been impressed on the pages of the latter. We entertained this hope with the greater confidence, from the conviction that the editor had too much discernment not to be aware that a responsibility peculiarly serious rests upon the individual who undertakes to conduct an AMERICAN REVIEW, which aspires, in its measure, at once to form and represent American sentiments and opinions. In despite of our sectional partialities, we are constrained to admit, that in respect to candour and fairness, whenever religion has been concerned, it has fallen far below its great eastern compeer. In the very first number of the work there was an article, which, from the levity and injustice with which the character of several of the most distinguished of the American clergy was treated, we considered of unpropitious omen. This, however, it seems, was but a premonition of the spirit afterwards to be exhibited. We question whether the pages of the respectable periodical literature of this country can furnish an instance of a more uncandid assault on the character and opinions of a large part of the Christian community, than the recent article on Sunday Mails in the American Quarterly Review. We cannot but regard the

\* Published in 1831, in reference to an article on this subject in the American Quarterly Review.

publication of that piece as a high offence against the professed principles of the work, and a flagrant breach of the confidence reposed in its conductors. The public, unquestionably, have a right to expect that works of this character should not avail themselves of the power lent to them for other purposes, to disseminate principles which the mild and venerable Bishop White pronounced anti-christian in their character, and licentious in their tendency. It is no justification of this course to state, there is a portion of professed Christians who agree with the leading doctrine of the article in question; for the Review professes not to be the virulent and party advocate of any set of opinions; much less does it claim the right of insulting, in behalf of an inconsiderable minority, the faith of nine-tenths of the Christian community of the country. The public, indeed, do not presume to pry into the private belief of its Editor, nor of any of its conductors; but in consenting to admit the work into their families, to operate on the opinions and character of their children, they surely have the right to expect that it should be kept free from decidedly anti-christian sentiments. It may well be that some of the contributors to that Review have no faith in Christianity at all, no regard for its institutions, nor respect enough for its worship to induce them to pass the threshold of a church once in twenty years. But would such persons be authorized to avail themselves of the access afforded them, under the name and sanction of American reviewers, into hundreds of Christian families, to attack the authority of our religion, or to asperse its doctrines and institutions? Assuredly not. And yet they might with too much truth affirm, that many of their readers coincide with their views. Or were they to appear as the open advocates of Unitarianism, the same justification might be offered. In either case, however, it is acknowledged that they would violate their contract with the public, by appearing in a different light from that in which their prospectus and general object present them. We are utterly at a loss to discern how they can justify themselves for having, in the article under review, assailed opinions which they know to be held sacred by a large portion of the community. Let it be borne in mind that we are not objecting to a consideration of the expediency or inexpediency of carrying the mail on Sunday; nor even to a discussion of the grounds on which the religious observance of that day is obligatory on Christians; but to the avowal and laboured support of the doctrine that the Sabbath was not originally a day devoted to the exercises of religion, and that it is now most appropriately kept by festivity and amusement. It is this doctrine which we affirm is abhorrent to the feelings of nine-tenths of the serious part of the public.

The reviewer asserts, "that the true construction of the Mosaic law is, that it (the Sabbath) should be kept as a day of festivity and gladness, and not by gloomy lectures and religious worship."—P. 178. In reference to the meaning of the phrase, "to keep it holy," he says: "It is asserted, on the other hand, that we are command-

ed to abstain, not only from labour, but from our usual amusements, from festivity, from social intercourse, such as is allowable on every other day, and that we should devote the Sunday to the solemn offices of religion, to the worship of God, public and private. We deny that such is the meaning of the commandment, but the reverse."—P. 180. "In short," as he quotes from some "learned author," "the Sabbath was celebrated, at first, like other festivals, with feasting, dancing, and other holiday recreations."—P. 182.

To our apprehension, these assertions carry the mark of absurdity on the very face of them. They represent the Sabbath as standing in a predicament occupied by no other religious institution in the world, ancient or modern. They exhibit it as being at utter variance with the whole system of which it is a part. The injunctions of every religion are certainly to be understood in a manner congruous to its own nature. The festivals of the heathen were thus in keeping with their religion. Those in honour of Ceres, Bacchus, or Venus, were attended by rites adapted to the character of the imaginary power to which they were consecrated. But the reviewer's position requires us either to suppose that the Sabbath had nothing in common with the system with which it was so intimately connected, or to renounce our whole belief as to the nature of that system. It is so evident that where a festival is enjoined, the manner of its observance must be adapted to the religion to which it belongs, that the very same formula of words must have very different meanings, under different circumstances. When we are told that a day was kept among the heathen as a time of joy and gladness, in honour of their gods, we take it for granted that the nature of that joy, and the mode of its expression, was determined by the nature of their mythology. And when in the Bible we are commanded to rejoice, to sing, to make the Sabbath a delight, we know just as surely that the joy, singing, and delight, are to be of a spiritual character, adapted to the religion of the Bible. If the Lord's day is to be observed, as we shall show is the faith of the whole Christian world, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, and of the pardon, purity, and eternal life thereby secured, it is self-evident that its appropriate celebration is not by worldly singing, dancing, and festivity, but by sincere thankfulness for these blessings, and joy adapted to their nature. Any man, therefore, who believes the Bible to contain a revelation of the true religion, and who entertains any correct idea of what religion is, must feel that the reviewer's assertions are in themselves incredible.

If the object for which any festival was instituted, determines its nature, and the manner of its observance, then it scarcely needs an argument to prove that the Sabbath is to be religiously celebrated. It was instituted to keep in mind the creation of the world. The great source of idolatry was ignorance of the origin of things. To preserve, therefore, the knowledge of the fact that God called the universe into existence, and, as the Creator, was the only proper



object of worship, was the most effectual means of preserving the true religion. That this was its object is expressly and repeatedly asserted. Thus in Ex. xx. 2, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." This assuredly means, that the end for which the day was to be observed was to commemorate this event. When the Hebrews were commanded "on the first month on the fourteenth day of the month," to keep the Passover, "for in this self-same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever," it is evident that the object of the feast was to keep in mind this merciful deliverance. And it is not less evident that when they were commanded to sanctify the seventh day, because God rested on that day, it was in commemoration of that event the day was to be celebrated. This is so often recognised as the end of the Sabbath, that it is not denied by any one, as far as we are aware, who has any pretension to knowledge on the subject. It is so obvious, that Rosenmüller remarks on this passage, that God appointed the Israelites to be thereby witnesses to all nations, that their God was the Creator of all things. "*Volebat septimae diei feriis memoriam creationis mundi conservari, et Israelitas ea re testatos omnibus gentibus facere, ab ipsis coli id numen, quod omnia creavit.*" It was hence a common saying among the ancient Rabbins, that "He who violates the Sabbath denies the creation." *Selden de Jure Naturali et Gentium*, lib. iii., p. 333. But if this was the object of the institution, how was it to be attained? The end to be answered was purely a religious one, the preservation of correct ideas of God; and will any one in his senses maintain that this was to be done by festivity and dancing? Can any one believe that God ever enjoined for such an end such means as these? But if the day was to be spent in the worship of this God, we can readily conceive how it should answer the end of its institution. Besides, if, as our Reviewer maintains, the object of the Sabbath was to give leisure for mere amusement, would, even under the Mosaic law, the penalty of death have been inflicted for its violation? This is impossible. But if its object was to secure, in that age of idolatry, a weekly recognition of God as the only true God, the creator of heaven and earth, we see how a deliberate profanation of the day might be viewed as a denial of the truth it was intended to commemorate, and consequently a rejection of the fundamental principle of the Jewish economy, which, under the theocracy, was an act of rebellion as well as of impiety.

It is in no measure inconsistent with the grand primary object of the Sabbath, that in Deuteronomy the Jews are commanded to observe it, and to allow their servants the necessary cessation from labour, because they themselves had been bondsmen in Egypt. It has always been admitted, that a secondary object of the institu-

tion was the refreshment of all labourers among men and the lower animals. The passage referred to, enjoins on the Hebrews a strict observance of this part of the command, from a recollection of their former hardships. This, therefore, is presented, not as the principal object of the institution, but a motive to obedience; and it is one of constant recurrence in the law of Moses. Thou shalt not oppress a stranger, because thou wast a stranger in the land of Egypt. All duties of this class are enforced by this same touching consideration that God intended the Sabbath should be a day of rest, therefore, to all men and beasts, is perfectly consistent with its being properly and primarily a religious institution, intended to commemorate the creation of the world. Hence, Selden, p. 332, says, "That the Hebrews when interrogated concerning the reason of keeping the Sabbath, might answer, because in six days God made heaven and earth. But the seventh they acknowledged to be τὴν τοῦ κοσμοῦ γενέθλιον ἡμέραν, *Diem mundi natalem*, and τὴν ἑορτὴν τοῦ κοσμοῦ γενέσιον, *Festum natalibus mundi sacratum*, as Philo denominates the Sabbath." And this he asserts was its great design.

It is clear, therefore, from the very intention of the Sabbath and from the nature of the religious system of which it was a part, that the Reviewer's doctrine as to the manner of its observance is incredible and derogatory to the religion of the Bible. Let us, however, hear his arguments in its support. They consist in the assertions that the phrase "To keep it holy," does not mean to separate it to religion; and that the amplification of the law does not warrant that construction here. "The literal or proper signification of the word *holy*," he says, "as we shall show, carries no such meaning; and in the context or amplification of the law, we find not a word to warrant this construction." P. 180. Instead of redeeming his pledge, and proving that the word *holy* has not the signification usually assigned to it, he only supports his own assertion, which he of course could not expect to be of much weight on such matters, by the *assertion* of some other "learned author," "that the word *kadash* or *keep holy*, does not ALWAYS signify to separate a thing to religion, as *sanctificare* does in Latin, but is taken for any separation whatever, from a common to a peculiar use, especially when that use is instituted of God." Now these two assertions are very wide apart. The difference between saying a word "has no such meaning," and that it has not ALWAYS that meaning, is immense. In the one case nothing short of an absolute necessity, *necessitas loci*, can authorize its being so interpreted in any given passage: whereas in the other, the strongest reasons should be present to justify a departure from what, by the assertion itself, is admitted to be its ordinary meaning. The Reviewer's zeal, therefore, has carried him much too far. The argument resolves itself into two parts, the first relating to the proper signification of the word *kadash*, and the second to its meaning in this particular command.

It so happens, that this word and its derivatives are among the

most frequently recurring in the Hebrew scriptures, and of course in the indefinite variety of their applications cannot have always precisely the same sense. All that is necessary to our purpose is, to show that its proper and dominant meaning is, *to separate to a sacred use*. And this, we presume, the Reviewer's author would not venture to deny. Let us for a moment appeal to authority on this point. Gesenius, in the last edition of his Hebrew Lexicon, tells us that in Piel (the form in question) it means 1. To sanctify (heiligen), to consecrate, as any one to the priesthood, an altar, and especially an offering, *Deo consecrare*. 2. To esteem holy. 3. Declare holy. 4. To perform something holy; and 5, to separate as holy. There is not one of the numerous passages cited under these several heads in which the idea of separation to a sacred use is not included in the meaning of the word. Eichhorn, in his edition of Simonis's Lexicon, says, that it means *ab usu et statu communi ad peculiarem et sacrum separare*. Rosenmüller on Gen. ii. 3, defines it, *sanctificare, in usum sanctum segregare ut et Graeci exponunt, ἀφορίζειν*. In Ex. xx. 8, the words which we render "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy," he translates and explains thus, "*Memor esto diei sabbathi, ut eum sacrum habeas, i. e., soli Deo dictatum, sive sepositum; hoc die Deum sancte colas.*" We have selected these three, from the multitude of lexicographers and commentators whose authority might be adduced, not only because they are among the most distinguished Hebraists of modern days, but because they can be as little suspected of reverence for the Sabbath as the Reviewer himself. This is a subject, however, on which we need rest on no man's authority. Every one who is able to read his Bible knows, as well as the greatest Hebraist can tell him, what the meaning of the word is. He knows that throughout the scriptures, the word holy is predominantly used to express one or the other of these two ideas, *morally pure*, as when God is called holy, and when we are commanded to be so, or *separated to a sacred use*. It is in this latter sense that the Hebrews are called a holy people; that the priests and Levites are called holy; that any place, as the tabernacle, the temple, Jerusalem, Palestine, is called holy; that the altar, candlestick, and all sacred utensils are called holy; and that the festivals are so denominated. In short, any person, place, thing, or portion of time, devoted to sacred purposes, is called holy, and this is the only proper word for expressing this idea. This use of the term occurs not once, nor twice, nor a hundred, but literally thousands of times, so that it is really idle to waste words on such a subject. The Reviewer never made a more adventurous assertion, than when he affirmed that this was not the proper meaning of the word.

But it is said the amplification of the command gives no warrant for this construction. To this we reply, that the proper and dominant use of the words is warrant enough. If the context presents nothing inconsistent with this sense, we are not authorised to depart from it. That there is no such inconsistency is perfectly



obvious. The command is, Thou shalt devote the Sabbath to the service of God; and the amplification is, In it thou shalt do no work. Is there any inconsistency here? But the Reviewer seems to suppose that the command to keep the Sabbath holy is explained by what follows, so that the whole sanctification consisted in omitting all servile labour. But this is not exactly so. The reason why such labour was to be omitted was, that the day was holy, i. e., consecrated unto God. This is constantly stated as the reason. "Six days may work be done, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest *holy unto the Lord*."—Ex. xxxi. 15. There is therefore nothing in the context to warrant a departure from the ordinary signification of the word, which is so uniformly preserved in all such connexions, that the utmost violence must be done to all just rules of interpretation, to make the command mean anything else than what it has usually been supposed to mean.

This interpretation is confirmed by all the notices of the Sabbath which we find in other parts of the scriptures. We are told that on that day the usual sacrifices were doubled. A great part of the ancient worship consisted in presenting these offerings, which were necessarily attended with confession, thanksgiving, and prayer. By this institution alone, the religious character of the day is distinctly marked. In Levit. xxiii. we have an account of all those feasts on which it was the duty of the people to assemble for worship. Among these the Sabbath is included. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation." In c. xvi. 2, it is said, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary," which implies that the day was to be observed religiously, from the connexion here expressed between the observance of the Sabbath and the duties of worship. All those numerous passages in which the object of the sanctification of the seventh day is stated to be, that they might know that Jehovah was their God, prove the same thing. Thus Ezekiel says: "Hallow my Sabbaths, that ye may know that I am the Lord thy God." Isaiah, in predicting a happy state of the church, says, "It shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh *come to worship before me*, saith the Lord."—Is. xvi. 23. Does not this imply that divine worship was the appropriate duty of the day? Again, Isaiah lviii. 13, it is said, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then," &c. Does this look like a description of a day devoted to festivity and dancing? Even Gesenius tells us that it means that all worldly business was to be omitted, and the day consecrated to devotion. "Wenn du den Sabbath nicht durch Umherlaufen zu weltlichen Geschäften entweihst, sondern daheim der Andacht weihst."—See Com. on Isaiah. It would, however, be almost an endless business

to gather up all the intimations contained in the old Testament, of the religious character of the Sabbath.

When we come to the New Testament, we find still clearer evidence of this fact. Everywhere it is said that the Sabbath was the day on which the people met in the synagogues for worship. Here the scriptures were read, prayer was made, and religious instruction communicated. This, it is asserted, was not a recent custom, but "Moses hath," it is said, "of old times in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." The Reviewer, it is presumed, will admit that long continued practice under a law is the best rule for its exposition. We have, however, still further testimony to the point in hand. Philo, the most learned of the Alexandrian Jews of the time of Christ, says, *De vita Mosis*, p. 602, "The day of the creation having sunk into oblivion was thus restored of God, and is to be observed by pious contemplations of divine things, and of the works of nature, and by no means in sloth, luxury, or amusement." In his *Tract. de Cherubim*, he draws a contrast between the manner in which the heathen festivals devoted to amusement and vice were observed, and those of the Hebrews. Josephus, the most distinguished of the Jews of Palestine, of nearly the same age, in his work *Contra Apion*, lib. iii., says, "This day, as the memorial of the creation, is to be piously celebrated, and was instituted of God that the law might be publicly read to the people and made known to all."

The assertion, therefore, of the Reviewer and his author, that the Sabbath was originally and properly observed as a day of dancing and festivity, is not only entirely gratuitous, but is contradicted by all the evidence of which the case admits. The meaning of the command is as plain as words can make it, that the day should be consecrated to religious worship. This interpretation is confirmed by the object of the institution, by the nature of the system of which it is a part, by the indubitable declarations of the ancient prophets, by the practice and testimony of the Jews in the time of Christ, and the opinions of their learned men to the present day. And this, as we have seen, is the conclusion to which not only devout Christians, but civilians, historians, and infidel antiquarians and commentators, have arrived. The learned Selden, who was no clergyman, speaking of the celebration of this day, says, p. 316, "*Quae (i. e. celebratio Sabbathi) in opere et laboribus, cultus causa, abstinendo, lege legenda, audienda, ac sacrificiis singularibus, maxime cernebatur.*"

We deem it hardly necessary to attempt to show, that among Christians, the first day of the week was observed as a day for religious worship, and not for recreation and amusement. In the New Testament, they are said to have met together "to break bread," that is, to celebrate the Lord's supper, and to hear the word. As the Christian Fathers universally say that the day was kept in commemoration of Christ's resurrection and the blessings

thereby secured, it is evident from this consideration alone, that it was a religious observance : that the joy to be indulged was such as flowed from the contemplation of these blessings, and the exercises of the day such as should fit us to appreciate and enjoy them. Our limits do not permit us to make numerous quotations in support of this assertion. The testimony of Barnabas, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Athanasius, Tertullian, and many others, may be found in Bingham's *Origines Ecclesiasticae*, vol. ix., c. ii., or Augusti's *Denkwürdigkeiten der Christ. Archæologie*, in several parts of the work, particularly the introduction to the first vol., and vol. iii., p. 345, and onward. Even the heathen knew enough of Christianity to know that it was a religion, and its festivals religious observances. Pliny, in his celebrated letter to Trajan, says, "Christianos stato die ante lucem solitos convenire carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem, seque sacramento obstringere non in scelus aliquod, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent."

Gregory Nazian. *Orat.* 38, in exhorting Christians to observe their sacred days aright, says, that it must not be done in a worldly manner, by adorning their houses, or gratifying the senses, by feasting, or any kind of amusement. These things, he tells them, should be left to the heathen. "But we," he adds, "who worship the word, should find our only pleasure in the scriptures and the divine law, and in narrating the events which the feast commemorates."

Under Constantine, the first Christian emperor, laws were made respecting the proper observance of the Lord's day, and repeated with more particularity under Theodosius ; not commanding the people to spend the day in amusement, but forbidding public shows and recreations. "Dominico, qui septimanae totius primus est,—omni theatrorum atque circensium voluptate, per universas urbes earundem populis denegata, totae Christianorum ac fidelium mentes Dei cultibus occupantur."—*Cod. Theod.*, xv., tit. 5. Such ordinances were frequently repeated, prohibiting all the usual business of life on that day, and all worldly amusements. They are cited here as indisputable evidence of the opinion of the early Christians, that the Lord's day was to be devoted exclusively to religious purposes. To give one testimony more. Ephrem, the Syrian, in his discourse *De diebus festis*, says, "Festivitates Dominicas honorare studiose contendite, celebrantes eas non panegyricè sed divine ; non mundane, sed spiritualiter ; non instar Gentilium sed Christianorum. Quare non portarum frontes coronemus ; non choreas ducamus ; non chorum exornemus ; non tibiis et citharis auditum effaeminemus, non mollibus vestibus induamur, nec cingulis undique auro radiantibus cingamur ; non commensationibus et ebrietatibus dediti simus, verum ista relinquamus eis quorum Deus venter est, et gloria in confusione ipsorum."

Augusti, in his remarks on the festivals of the early Christians, says, "The main idea and object of the holy days and feasts, was to keep vividly in mind the principal benefits of Christianity, and



the person of the Redeemer, to promote gratitude to God, and the exercise of the Christian virtues. It was common to prepare for these festivals by fastings, but the festivals themselves were regarded as days of rejoicing; in which the Christian, undisturbed by any of his ordinary employments, should devote himself to contemplations and exercises of piety. So far, however, were these festivals from being days of worldly pleasure, or similar to the holidays of the heathen, that from the moment Christianity became the religion of the state, the church felt that she had no more urgent duty to perform, than to employ her power in protecting the sacred days and usages, and to secure the prohibition of all public amusements by which the sacredness of divine worship might be invaded."—*Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. p. 97. This is the testimony of a historian and antiquarian, not a "sabbatarian," or a "terrorist," but of a German rationalist, respecting the usage, not of a set of gloomy puritans, but of the early Christian church in general, and of that Catholic church which boasts of being infallible.

With regard to the opinions of the several denominations of Christians on this subject, little need be said. It is so universally known that the Church of England is one of the strictest of Protestant churches in her doctrines respecting the Sabbath, we shall give but a single extract from her book of Homilies, "So if we be the children of our Heavenly Father, we must be careful to keep the Christian Sabbath day, which is Sunday, not only for that it is God's commandment, but also to declare ourselves to be loving children in following the example of our gracious Lord and Father. Some use all days alike. The other sort worse; for although they will not labour nor travail on the Sunday, yet they will not rest in holiness as God commands them, but they rest in ungodliness and filthiness, prancing in their pride," &c., &c. Volumes might be filled with quotations from her most illustrious sons to the same amount. That her children in this country have not forsaken her doctrines, on this subject, we need no other proof than the "Three Letters addressed to the editor of the American Quarterly Review," by the venerable Bishop of Pennsylvania. Standing as he does at the head of the Episcopal Church in the United States, his ready appearance to vindicate the Lord's Day from the unworthy attack of the Reviewer, entitles him to the grateful acknowledgments of all the Christians in the country. That the Congregationalists and Presbyterians regard the Sabbath as a day that should be devoted to religion, no one would thank us for proving. The same is true with regard to the Methodists and Baptists. The Catholics are as strict, in doctrine, in this respect, as the Protestants. They hold that the scriptures teach that the feasts and usages of the Old Testament were not repealed, but merely spiritualized, under the new dispensation, and that this was especially the case with the Sabbath; which the ancient church merely transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, in commemoration of the Sa-

viour's resurrection. This is the Catholic doctrine, as defended by Bellarmin in his work, "*Adversus hujus temporis haereticos*;" i. e., the Protestants; by Durand, "*Rationale divinorum officiorum*;" by Gretser, and all their leading writers.\* The last named author, in his work "*De festis Christianorum*," lib. i., contends that the Christian festivals are not matters of mere external order and discipline. "*Festa Christianorum non solum ratione ordinis et disciplinae, sed etiam ratione mysterii celebrari: et esse hos dies festos aliis sanctiores et sacratiores et partem quandam divini cultus.*" And the council of Trent enjoins that these festivals should be observed, not as days of amusement, but "in a truly religious and devotional manner."

The Reviewer, therefore, in denying that "the Sunday is to be devoted to the solemn offices of religion," and in asserting that it is appropriately a day of recreation and amusement, has not assailed an opinion of this or that particular sect, but of the whole Christian church. If this is not to be considered as a breach of contract with the public, we know not what can be. Surely no one doctrine of our religion, nor that religion itself, can be considered safe from his assaults, if this be deemed a justifiable aggression. We, of course, do not complain of him, nor of any other man, for publishing his opinions, but we do complain that he should make a Literary Review the vehicle of such doctrines. Believing, as Christians almost universally, at least in this country, do, that the religious observance of the Lord's day is one of the most essential means of sustaining the cause of religion and good morals, it is as much a matter of surprise as regret, that the enlightened conductors of the American Quarterly, for the sake of gratifying an unworthy clique against the religious public, should allow themselves to be betrayed into so serious an attack on such an institution. No one appears to have a quicker or more just perception of the indications of coming evil, in this country, than the editor of that Review. He mourns over the unbridled licentiousness of the press; he is startled at the idea of universal *equal* education; he regards with little complacency the annual importation of thousands of uneducated foreigners, to control our elections, and vitiate our population; and he would be the last man in the world to maintain, that a popular government, founded on ignorance and vice, was either possible or desirable. He seems even less disposed than his neighbours, to rejoice in the progress of freedom, where he suspects the requisite intelligence and virtue do not exist. Recognizing, as he does, that good morals are the only stable support of free institutions, and the only effectual bulwark of social order and domestic happiness, why is it he so pertinaciously attacks an institution, without which public virtue assuredly never can be maintained? We use the word pertinaciously, because the article in

his Review, is not the only effusion on this subject, which has appeared under his auspices. His paper has been repeatedly made the vehicle of nearly the same sentiments; culling, from sources the most heterogeneous, matter suited to his purpose; pardoning even the radicalism of the *Morning Chronicle*, in behalf of its latitudinarianism on religion. As the friends of good morals and decorous discussion, we are very far from being insensible to the merits of the *National Gazette*. We cheerfully acknowledge that it is often the able advocate of the cause of virtue, and the temperate and dignified rebuker of corrupting publications. This, however, only increases our regret that it should manifest such hostility to an institution, which, as a means of promoting public virtue, stands, in our view, pre-eminent and unapproachable. Whether this opinion be correct or not, it is entertained by so large a portion of the community, that it is entitled to respectful consideration, and is, we think, capable of being clearly established.

Neither the editor nor the reviewer will deny that some religion is essential to man; that, by the constitution of our nature, men are as necessarily religious as they are moral or intellectual beings. This is proved by universal experience, and according to Cicero, *Tusc. I.* "Omni in re consensio omnium gentium, lex naturae putanda est." As all nations have had some religion, we must admit that it is a law of our nature, that men should have some method of expressing the feelings which arise from their consciousness of relation to a superior being. All history teaches us that the forms in which these feelings express themselves, depend on the light communicated to the understanding. If men are taught that they are in the hands of numerous and conflicting powers, some intent on good, others on evil, we see them tossed and agitated with constant fears, busying themselves with all possible devices to obtain favour or impunity. There is no more melancholy spectacle than men thus struggling under the pressure of distorted notions of the objects of worship; notions which pervert the finest constituents of their nature, and impress their own deformed image on the soul. It is a fact established by experience, and one easily accounted for, that men are always conformed in their internal character to their religion; not to the religion which they may profess, but to that system of religious opinions which they really entertain. The most important feature of human character, therefore, depends on correct knowledge of God. How is this to be obtained? Arguing either from the Bible, which the reviewer does not profess to reject, or from experience, it is clear, that it never has been, and cannot be secured by the unaided reason of man. The cause of this lies, as the apostle informs us, not in the inadequacy of the revelation which the works of God and our own constitution make of the divine character, but in the moral state of the human soul, which blinds it to these manifestations of divine excellence, and disinclines it to the purity of truth. So that although knowing God, men glorify him not as God, neither are thankful, but become vain in their



imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they become fools, and change the image of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. This is the history of man in all ages and countries, and under all diversities of culture, where the light of revelation has not been enjoyed. We might as well expect the productions of the vegetable world to unfold in all their variety of beauty, in utter seclusion from the sun, as that the religious feelings of men should be developed in conformity with truth, where the rays of divine knowledge never visit the mind.

Experience teaches us another lesson with equal clearness and fullness, that there can be no adequate culture of our moral nature under the influence of a corrupt system of religion. The apparent exceptions to this remark are few, and they are but apparent. Its correctness as the statement of a general fact cannot be denied. If these two points, resting on the testimony of indisputable facts, be admitted, the necessity of correct knowledge to the existence of true religion, and the necessity of religion to good morals, then it is clear, that to secure for society correct religious knowledge is essential to preserve it from the equal horrors of superstition and immorality. The insufficiency of mere speculative knowledge or general illumination to accomplish this object is evident, not only from the limited sphere of its action, but from its want of adaptation to the end. Only a few, comparatively, can ever be made the subjects of this high intellectual culture, and if they could, there is nothing in the mere knowledge of facts unconnected with religion, to call forth and form any man's religious or moral feelings. These are still left to be moulded by notions which enter by chance and gain a lodgment in the mind. If surrounded by a society in which correct ideas on these subjects abound, he may imbibe a portion of these, and thus, in a measure, be preserved from the evils resulting from that neglect of religion in which he glories. And this, it may be remarked, is the security of our modern infidels, or we should see them, after the manner of better men of old, suspending their most important movements on the flight of birds, and quaking at a raven's croak.

If religious knowledge is thus essential to form the character of men, how is it to be communicated? It does not come by immediate revelation from the omnipresent and all pervading Spirit of God: and although traced in lines of light and beauty on his works, these have never been read with sufficient clearness to enlighten the understanding or impress the heart. But God has communicated it to us by those "holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." But even this clear and sufficient revelation of God and our duty, which happily in this country may be in every man's hands, is silent. It arrests no man's attention, it utters no remonstrance when neglected, and never was designed to supersede a more direct and impressive mode of instruction. We

are told that "it hath pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." And it is written, that when Christ ascended up on high, "he gave some pastors and some teachers" for the very purpose of diffusing this knowledge and securing its effects. It is, therefore, by divine appointment that religious knowledge should be communicated by living teachers. But waving this consideration, how in point of fact is it communicated? Can it be denied that, in this and every other country, the great majority of men derive their knowledge on religion mainly from the ministrations of its public teachers? Most men are so occupied with the concerns of life, that they entirely neglect the attainment of any regular or adequate religious knowledge by their own exertions. Were it not for what they learn from the "gloomy lectures" of the Sabbath, they would remain as ignorant as the heathen of God and a future state. So long as a large portion of society observe this day, and gather enough of knowledge to imbue the common fund with correct ideas, the evils may not be so apparent. But let us look at places where the reviewer's plan is fully carried out, where religious instruction from the pulpit is utterly neglected, and the Lord's day devoted to amusement, and we will find the most deplorable ignorance on all religious subjects. It matters not whether such communities be found on our own western frontiers, among the polished circles of Paris, or the profligate population of London. We of course speak of general facts. Individual exceptions, to which the mind is apt to advert, and which, to be properly estimated, must be viewed in all their circumstances, disprove nothing on this subject. It is capable of being clearly proved as a matter of fact, that the public teaching of the Sabbath is a great source of religious knowledge to the mass of the community, and consequently if this be neglected, and men spend the day appropriated for this purpose in festivity or idleness, ignorance the most destructive to their best feelings and interests must be the result.

The diffusion of religious knowledge, however, is not the only good resulting from a proper observance of the Sabbath. It is a day appointed not only to learn our duty towards God, but to perform it; to call off the mind from the objects which necessity forces upon it during the week, and place it in the presence of God; to awaken from their torpor those feelings of adoration, gratitude and confidence, which the divine greatness and goodness should excite. The regular return of this day is as healthful to society as the showers which soften, fertilize, and beautify the earth, bringing with them the influence of heaven. The good derived from such seasons of devotion is not confined to the hour spent within the church. The feelings there excited are strengthened by the exercise: their permanent influence over the mind is increased. The whole man is refined and elevated, and he goes forth into the world better fortified against its temptations, and better fitted to diffuse a healthful tone into public sentiment and feeling. These

stated periods of public worship, therefore, are the great means of keeping alive a sense of religion among men, of maintaining the consciousness of their relation to the infinite God, and thus preventing them from sinking down into the mere intellectual or sensual animal. If the observance of the Sabbath be the great means of preserving religious feeling in the community, the question comes to this, whether it is desirable that this feeling should be maintained ; whether, if all sense of the infinite and eternal, all connection with the pure and the holy, every bond with the invisible and future world were destroyed, men would be either better or happier ? Could civilized society exist were this once effected ? We think not. The restraints, which regard for reputation, a sense of honour, or desire of influence, exercise over men, derive their principal force from the general tone of society, which would, under such circumstances, be entirely vitiated. The reviewer, however, would join beyond doubt in praising religion in the general, and repeat the common-places as to its necessity and excellence, while he laboriously advocates a course which would more effectually banish it from Christendom than any other he could devise. Voltaire is said to have vowed the destruction of Christianity, and tried long and hard to effect his object, but gave it up in despair, saying, it was impossible as long as people would assemble every week for religious worship. And this is true. For every religion must have some means whereby to sustain itself, and bring its influence to bear on those who profess it. Paganism has its rites and its priests ; Mahomedanism has its mosques, its public prayers, its sacred day and its Koran, their civil and religious code ; and Christianity has its Sabbaths, on which to exhibit its claims, and urge its duties and promises. We have seen that, in point of fact, it is mainly through this instrumentality its influence is exerted. What then is the desecration of this day, but the destruction of its power ? And what is an exhortation to men to spend the day in idleness and amusement, but an exhortation to emancipate themselves from its sacred influences ?

It is not, however, merely as a means of sustaining religion, that this day is of such incalculable importance ; its proper observance is the only security of public morals. This assertion is not founded exclusively on the assumption, however correct, that religion is necessary to virtue. The subject may be viewed in another light. Every one knows that the moral sense acts under the guidance of the understanding. It is not the power of deciding infallibly on what is right or wrong, but it is the feeling of approbation or disapprobation which rises in the mind on the view of actions which it has been taught, either from the constitution of its nature, or by education, to consider good or bad. The class of actions respecting which information is derived from the first of these sources, as all other intuitive truths, is very small ; and, therefore, although conscience be as much an original constituent of our nature as reason, it as much needs culture and correct information to secure



its proper exercise. Hence, the only possible way to preserve men from all the evils of a perverted or hardened moral sense, is to have a correct rule of duty presented to them; as the only way to save men from intellectual aberrations, is the exhibition of truth and its evidences. That Christianity contains the purest system of moral truth ever presented to the world, is admitted, except by infidels of the very lowest class. It is one great object of the exercises of the Sabbath, to exhibit this rule of duty; to bring the people to understand its requisitions, and feel their obligation. And such is the constitution of our nature, that moral truth contains its own evidence. The ground of the assent which we yield to it, is its congruity with the internal law of our nature. Hence this knowledge does not rest in the understanding, but is imbibed and becomes an active principle. It makes men better as well as wiser. It might easily be proved, that the services of the Lord's day are the great source of information and culture of a moral kind to the people. It is here as with religious knowledge, comparatively few read or study for themselves. If the Sabbath, therefore, be devoted to amusement, the people will assuredly grow up in ignorance. Let it be remembered, that ignorance here is error. A man whose moral sense is unenlightened, has not the restraints nor the incentives necessary to virtue. What a society must become, where the moral sense is thus degraded, every man can conceive. Men may be virtuous though they know nothing of science or history, but ignorance of duty is inseparable from vice. Virtue cannot exist under it, for virtue is the conformity of heart and life to moral truth. It is, therefore, the height of inconsistency for a man to be constantly repeating the truism, that virtue is essential to the well-being of society, and yet labour to destroy the great source of that knowledge, without which virtue cannot exist.

The advantages of a religious observance of the Lord's day, already referred to, are sufficient to entitle it to the respect and reverence of all good men. There are others scarcely less important, on which our limits will not permit us to dwell. The regular congregation of friends and neighbours on that day in the place of worship, to mingle their feelings before the throne of God, tends to unite them in the purest and strongest bands. The differences arising from wealth and other adventitious circumstances here disappear. The high are humbled without being depressed; the low are exalted without being elated. The chord, which vibrates in one breast, is felt in all the others, awaking the consciousness of community of origin and of nature. They learn that God has made of one flesh all the dwellers upon earth; that he has breathed one spirit bearing his own image into them; placed all under the same benevolent laws; offers the same glorious immortality to all; and has thus bound them together as one great brotherhood. It is hence obvious, that of all institutions, this is the most directly efficacious in promoting peace, charity, justice, sympathy, and all other amiable feelings. Experience teaches us, that of all men,

those are most sincerely attached who are accustomed to worship together.

The exercises of the Sabbath, moreover, are among the most efficient means of intellectual culture. The mass of men employed in mechanical occupations have few subjects on which their minds can be exercised. Their employments present little or nothing to enlarge or vary their thoughts. For reading they have little time and less inclination. It is principally from attendance on church, where other subjects are presented; where new and elevating ideas are exhibited; where their attention is excited and minds tasked, that their intellectual powers receive their chief development. It is the grand desideratum in education, to devise means to call forth the powers of the mind in due proportion, without perverting or injuring its moral sensibilities. With this view, enlightened men have laboured to bring down the abstract principles of science to the level of the labouring classes. But these subjects are not sufficiently exciting to arouse general attention. It must be admitted that there is nothing so well adapted to the purpose, as moral and religious truth. As objects of intellectual knowledge, they are the most expanding which the mind can apprehend, while their influence on all the feelings is correcting and purifying. A community in whose education these truths are made mainly instrumental, will be, of all others, the most adequately cultivated; their intellectual faculties most fully developed, and their moral principles the most correctly formed. In support of this assertion, we may again appeal to experience. It is a fact familiar to all whose attention has been turned to the subject, that even illiterate and feeble minded men, when brought to take an interest in religious truth, have exhibited a surprising increase in mental strength. The contrast between Pagan and Christian countries, in respect to mental improvement, is, in no small degree, owing to the same cause. The truths of Christianity cannot enter the mind without enlarging it. To the same source may, in a great measure, be traced the striking difference between the common people in Catholic and Protestant countries. The religious services of the former consist, almost exclusively, in exercises of devotion. And even their worship, conducted in an unknown language, is but imperfectly comprehended. No distinct objects of mental apprehension are presented, and consequently their minds are but little exercised, although devout feeling may be excited. Hence the religion of the Catholics is, with the common people, so much a matter of feeling and so little of principle. And hence the glaring inconsistency, so often to be found among them, between their open immorality and austere devotion; bandits and prostitutes being habitually religious. In Protestant countries, a great part of the duties of the Sabbath is the communication of knowledge. The scriptures are uniformly read, and discourses delivered by educated men.

Another advantage of the religious observation of the Lord's day is, that it tends to promote genuine liberty. This necessarily

results from what we have already said. If it is the means of enlightening the minds of men, it disenthral them from the yoke of superstition and the bondage of the priests. If it is the means of teaching them their essential equality before God, it destroys the very foundation of tyranny. In making them feel that they have a common origin and a common destiny, it teaches the high they have no right to oppress the low, and the low they are entitled to be recognised as brethren. Hence Christians are the only freemen on the face of the globe. The rise of this religion was the era of civil liberty. And it has only been where Christianity has been obscured, and its truths prevented from entering the minds of the people, that they have ever been reduced to bondage. The men to whom the world is principally indebted for civil liberty, were men most deeply Christian. The principles of our religion are thus directly favourable to freedom, and they are essential to its preservation. Anything, therefore, which diminishes their force on the public mind, is so much done to destroy that cause to which we are so loud in our profession of attachment. We do not now insist on the acknowledged necessity of virtue to freedom, of religion to virtue, of knowledge to religion, and of a regular system of instruction to bring this knowledge to bear on the minds of the people. These, however, are obvious truths, and they go to show how intimately the happiness and liberty, the knowledge and virtue of men, are connected with the proper observance of the Sabbath.

There is still one other view, and one which confers on this institution its chief value in the eyes of Christians. The Bible tells us that men are sinners; that the wages of sin is death; that Jesus Christ came into the world to deliver men from the consequences of their apostasy; that the Gospel is the proclamation of God's readiness to pardon and accept them on the terms which it prescribes; the Sabbath is the day appointed for making known these offers of mercy and for urging their acceptance. Thousands thus hear these offers, who would never hear them in any other way. And of the millions who accept them, few would do so, were it not for their being thus constantly presented and urged. Here, to those who believe the Bible, opens a prospect which earth and its interests cannot bound. It is not the welfare, nor even the virtue of men here, that is alone concerned; it is their everlasting welfare and virtue in the world to come, which the Christian sees are intimately connected with the proper observance of this day. He cannot shut his eyes to the evidence of the fact, that it is through the regular preaching of the Gospel men are usually brought to accept of its offers, and become fitted for death and eternity. To his view, therefore, the importance of the Sabbath is beyond all estimate. And he cannot but regard any attempt to lessen its influence, or to lead men to neglect its duties, as directed not only against all that is desirable in human character in this world, but against their well-being in the world to come. Infidels may sneer at all this. But truth is indestructible by ridicule. And he must



be weak indeed, who suffers the light estimation of others to affect his reverence for an institution, while all the evidence of its value remains untouched.

We feel persuaded we have not over rated the importance of the Sabbath. The experience of communities and nations bears out our statements. Those sections of our own country where the day is best observed, are distinguished by superior intelligence, piety, good morals and social order. Those nations which are remarkable for a regard to the Sabbath, take the lead in the world in general cultivation, in sound religion, in activity and energy of character, in internal stability and order, and in external respect and power. These are the nations which have been the mothers and guardians of civil and religious liberty, and are now doing almost all that is done in the diffusion of knowledge and piety through the world. Such is the position occupied by Great Britain and these United States—two countries distinguished throughout Christendom for their regard for the Sabbath, as they are distinguished throughout the world for their internal prosperity and their diffusive and benign influence. That this favourable distinction will not long survive their regard for the Sabbath, we as firmly believe, as that religion and virtue are essential to the well-being of society.

We come now to inquire, What obligations are Christians under to observe this day? And here we would remark, that if what we have already said be correct, the obligation must be of the highest moral character. If the religious observance of the Lord's day be the means of diffusing religious knowledge, of exciting and sustaining religious feeling and moral principle in the community; if it tends to refine the character and promote all the social virtues; if it is the highest means to multitudes of intellectual culture; if it raises men to a sense of their own dignity, while it depresses their false pride and arrogant claims; and, finally, if it is the grand means of leading them to the attainment of eternal life, then is every man bound to promote this observance by all those obligations which bind him to promote the temporal and eternal interests of his fellow men. Then, too, it is obvious, that all efforts, whether by argument or ridicule, to lessen its influence, is so much done to render men wicked and miserable, both in this life and that which is to come. We feel almost as though it were superfluous to inquire, whether God has added to an obligation so obvious and so imperious, that of a positive command. Had no such precepts as "Thou shalt not kill," or "Thou shalt not commit adultery," been recorded in the scriptures, the obligation would be complete from the nature and consequences of the acts themselves. In like manner, though we were unable to prove that God had commanded us to keep holy one day in the seven, we think the obligation would still be binding, after a custom so salutary had once been introduced. There is, however, from the obvious tendency of this observance to promote the best interests of society,

a strong presumption that God has enjoined it. We know that the object of the religion which he has revealed is to promote the purity and happiness of men. And if there is an institution, which is essential to the preservation and influence of this religion, it is surely to be presumed that it is of divine appointment. That the observance of a day on which the rites of this religion should be celebrated, its truths and claims presented, is of primary importance, we think can hardly be denied. How is any system of truth to be received and obeyed, unless presented to the mind? And how is this to be done, unless time be appropriated for the purpose? Will men of themselves, and each one for himself, go to the silent record, and ascertain and receive all that God has enjoined and promised? Surely no other religion was ever thus left without any means of accomplishing its object. Besides, if it be a dictate of reason that we should worship God, if this is to be done in our social, as well as individual capacity, and if this union of men to make their joint homage to their Maker be, in like manner, a dictate of nature, then it is to be presumed, that in a revealed religion, which enforces all other duties which the law of our nature enjoins, this duty of public worship is commanded. And as it is a duty which must be often repeated, it is also to be presumed, that its stated discharge would be insisted upon, and time allotted for the purpose. Nothing, surely, can be more obvious than that if this were not the case, the duty itself would be in a great measure neglected. The evident importance, therefore, of the appointment of a day for religious purposes, in order to enable the religion of the Bible to accomplish the purposes for which it was revealed, and to secure the stated discharge of one of the plainest of moral obligations, creates at least a presumption that the true religion is not the only religion without its sacred days.

In turning to the scriptures, we find almost on the first page, in the very history of the creation, it is recorded, that in six days God made heaven and earth, that he rested on the seventh day, "Therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." The meaning of this passage admits of no dispute. When God is said to bless anything, it implies that he favourably distinguishes it, in some way or other. The seventh day was thus distinguished by being sanctified, or set apart for a sacred use. That this is the meaning of the term we have already proved. If, then, from the very creation of the world God commanded men to consecrate one day in seven to his service, we may fairly conclude that this is a duty of universal and perpetual obligation. The way in which the force of this passage is commonly evaded, is not by denying its obvious import, but by assuming it to be a prolepsis, or anticipation of an event which occurred upwards of two thousand years afterward. According to this idea, Moses does not mean to state that God did then sanctify the seventh day, but merely that his having rested on the seventh day was the reason why, in after ages, he selected that day as the Sabbath. The objections to this

assumption, however, appear to us decisive. In the first place, it takes for granted, without the least evidence, that the book of Genesis was not written until after the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. Whereas, the probability is entirely on the side of its having been written at an earlier period. But secondly, it does evident violence to the context. This verse is obviously a part of a regular narrative of consecutive events. Let any unprejudiced man read the passage and decide for himself. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work." Is not this a regular narrative of facts? God created all things in six days, he rested on the seventh, and blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. There is not the slightest intimation that the latter verse refers to an event, which did not take place for ages after those recorded in the two immediately preceding. Those who make so violent an assumption, are surely bound to produce the strongest reasons in its justification.

In favour of taking the passage in its obvious sense, it may be urged, that there are many important arguments in favour of the ante-Mosaic origin of the Sabbath. The day was appointed in commemoration of the creation. Its grand design was to preserve the knowledge of the true God as the creator of the world. The necessity or ground of the institution, therefore, existed from the beginning. There is in this consideration alone, a strong presumptive proof of its having been appointed at the time specified in Genesis ii. 3. Besides, we know that a large portion of the laws of Moses did not originate with him. The rites and usages of the Hebrews, from the earliest times, were incorporated into his code. Circumcision, sacrifices, the distinction between clean and unclean animals, the right of divorce, the duties of the avenger of blood, the obligation of a brother to marry the widow of his deceased brother, and many other cases of this kind, might be cited. It was the object of Moses, under divine direction, to embody in one code all the traditionary knowledge and laws of his people, and to institute such new regulations as should most effectually preserve them distinct from other nations, and prepare them and the world for the coming of Christ. With regard to the laws, and especially the festivals, which originated with him, it is to be observed, that they arose out of the existing state of the people, or were intended to keep in mind some recent event in their history. This was the case with the Passover, Feast of Tabernacles, &c. When, therefore, there is an institution, which betrays no such local origin, and is designed to commemorate no such recent event, the presumption is strongly in favour of its being one of the traditionary usages which make up so large a part of his laws. This is the case with the Sabbath. This command is not enforced, as the others are, by considerations drawn from their immediate history; but they are commanded to rest on the seventh day because God rested on that day and sanctified it.



The very form in which the command is given, favours the idea of the previous observance of the day. *Remember* the Sabbath day to keep it holy. This mode of expression is not used in reference to feasts which he had but just established. It is nowhere said, *remember* the Passover, or any other festival. Besides, there is positive evidence of the Sabbath before the solemn enactment of the law on Mount Sinai. This did not occur until the third month after the departure out of Egypt. Yet we find that in the second month, when in the wilderness of Sin, being pressed for food, the people were supplied by manna from heaven. This perishable article they were commanded to gather from day to day, and not to attempt to preserve it over the twenty-four hours. But on the sixth day, Ex. xvi. 22, the people, of their own accord, gathered a double portion. The rulers came and told Moses, apparently desirous to know whether the manna would keep, or whether they might not expect the usual supply on the following day. Moses told them, the people were right, that as the morrow was the Sabbath, no manna would be given, but the double portion gathered on the sixth day would remain sweet over the seventh. Had the people acted under the direction of Moses in this business, the rulers could not have been ignorant of it, and would not have gone to him for instruction.

There is another remark applicable to many of the laws of Moses; in frequent instances something is commanded, but the manner of the performance or details of the duty are not specified. This is the case, however, only where the thing prescribed was already familiar, and usage had fixed the mode in which it was to be done. Thus, in regard to the Sabbath, we find merely the general directions, that the day was to be consecrated to God; all labour intermitted, the sacrifices doubled, and a holy convocation held. But what particular things were prohibited or enjoined, we find nowhere minutely stated. With respect, however, to those feasts which were unquestionably instituted by Moses, we find the greatest particularity as to the prescriptions. Whence this difference? Does it not arise from the fact, that the Sabbath was one of those usages with which the people were familiar, and therefore did not need such particular instructions?

A strong confirmation of this view is derived from the division of time into portions of seven days. It is mentioned in the account of the deluge; in the history of Jacob; it is found among all ancient nations, the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Asiatics, and even among the American Indians. Whatever was the origin of this division, it is evident that it must have been very ancient. There are three methods of accounting for it. The first is, that it arose from dividing the months into four portions. This is very improbable, because seven is not the fourth, either of twenty-nine and a half days, the real length of a lunar month, or of thirty days, which was the number assigned as early as the flood. The other method is that which Selden and many others have adopted.

They suppose, the names of the seven planets being given to the days of the week determined their number. To this supposition it may be objected, that the division existed at a period anterior to any indications of much astronomical knowledge, and that affixing the names of the planets to certain days, was evidently subsequent to the introduction of idolatry, and belief of the influence of the stars over the affairs of men. Of the latter, especially, we have no evidence as early as the times of Noah. Besides, had this been the true origin of the division of time into weeks, we should expect that the names of the planets would have been given in their natural order, instead of succeeding each other in a manner perfectly arbitrary. The various ingenious answers which have been given to this difficulty, all suppose such a degree of refinement in the mode of proceeding, as could only belong to an age far more recent than that in which the computation by weeks is known to have existed.\* The third method is by far the most satisfactory. It supposes the division to have existed from the beginning, and to have arisen from the fact recorded by Moses, that God created all things in six days and rested on the seventh. We know that some obscure knowledge of the creation, deluge, and dispersion, has been preserved among all nations. And, therefore, it is not surprising that so convenient a distribution of time, although arbitrary, has passed from one nation to another. If God did from the creation set apart the seventh day to himself, we need no other reason to account for the origin and prevalence of this mode of computation. This fact, too, best accounts for the sacredness attributed among almost all ancient nations, to the number seven. This was everywhere a sacred number. The manner in which the ancients speak of this number and of the seventh day, is sufficiently remarkable, and has led many learned men, as Theophilus of Antioch, and Clemens of Alexandria, among the ancients; and Grotius, Huët, Budes, and many others among the moderns, to suppose that this day was held sacred by all antiquity. The passages cited on this subject may be seen in Selden, lib. iii., c. 16—19, together with his answers to the arguments derived from them. Admitting all that he says, it is at least clear that this number was considered sacred throughout the ancient world.

We say, then, the plain meaning of the narrative in Gen. ii.; the very reason and nature of the institution; the manner in which the law in Exodus is expressed; the observance of the day before that law was given; the fact that Moses, as a general rule, adopted the *jus consuetudinarium* of his people; the division of time into weeks, long before him; the diffusion of this mode of computation over the world, and the universal sacredness attached to the number seven, are arguments for the institution of the Sabbath from the creation, which we are unable to resist.

The most obvious objection to this opinion, is the absence of

\* See, on this subject, Selden de Jure Nat. et Gen., lib. iii.

positive evidence of the religious observance of the seventh day by the Patriarchs. To this it may be replied, there is not such absolute want of evidence on this point, as is often asserted. In the history of Cain and Abel it is said, "at the end of days" (as the Hebrew phrase should be rendered) they brought their respective offerings unto God. We cannot decide, with certainty, what this expression means; but, taken in connexion with the statement immediately preceding, that God had set apart to religion the seventh day, which was the close of a regular period, the probability is, that by the "end of days" we are to understand the end of the week, or Sabbath. Besides, the fact already noticed, that Noah and the immediate ancestors of the Hebrews divided their time into weeks, renders it probable there was some regular observance of the seventh day. But admitting all the objection assumes, that there is no evidence of the religious observance of the Sabbath anterior to Moses, we remark, this is no decisive proof that it was not in fact observed; and if it were, its non-observance would be no decisive argument against its original appointment. In support of the former of these assertions, that silence is no decisive proof of non-observance, it should be remembered the narrative is very short, and goes but little into detail. The history of two thousand five hundred years is comprised in a few pages. This circumstance alone almost invalidates the objection. But the argument would prove too much. From the time of Joshua to that of David, a period of five or six hundred years, there is little or nothing said of the Sabbath. Are we hence to infer that it was not at all observed during this period? certainly not. This is equally true of a great majority of the laws of Moses; their faithful observance cannot be historically proved, and yet we should not be authorized to conclude from the mere silence of the record that they were entirely neglected. As to the second point, that non-observance is no decisive argument against the original appointment of the Sabbath, the case is still clearer. As just remarked, although we know that the Hebrew polity was arranged by Moses, as described in the Pentateuch, yet there are many of his laws of which there is no evidence, for ages, of their being actually obeyed. The objection under consideration, as applied to the Sabbath, would require us to believe that Moses never enjoined any of these laws. We may take a still stronger case. We know from the highest authority, that God in instituting marriage ordained that a man should have but one wife. Yet the patriarchs were polygamists; and even after Moses, a plurality of wives was considered lawful among the Hebrews. This, of course, cannot be considered as any proof that God had not at the beginning given a clear intimation of his will on this subject. How, then, can it be inferred from the fact the Sabbath was neglected, even if the fact be admitted, that it was not commanded at the time of the creation? The inference is obviously unauthorised; and yet this is the main ground on which the advocates of the Mosaic origin of this



institution, rest their cause, and endeavour to invalidate the plain testimony in Gen. ii. 3.

Another argument is, that the Sabbath was a Jewish institution, having a local origin and design; that is, designed to commemorate an event in which they alone were interested. In proof of which they appeal to such passages as Exodus xxxi. 13, and others, in which the Sabbath is said to be a sign between God and his ancient people; and to those in which Moses is said to have given them the Sabbath, as in Nehemiah ix. 13, 14. From the former class it is inferred that if the Sabbath was a sign between God and the Jews, it must be peculiar to them and instituted for them. But this inference is unsound. Anything, in the language of the scriptures, is called a sign which was selected by God to be a memorial of any truth, or confirmation of any promise. It matters not whether the thing selected be ordinary or extraordinary in its character; whether it was previously familiar, or originated for the occasion. Thus, God tells Noah the rainbow should be a sign between him and the earth that the flood never should return. This does not prove that the bow of heaven had never previously been seen; it only declares that it was selected as the memorial of God's gracious determination. In like manner, though the Sabbath had long been familiar to the Hebrews, God might have chosen that observance as a standing memorial of the fact, that the true God was their God. And it is evident that the selection was, of all others, the most appropriate; for the object of the original institution of the Sabbath was to keep in mind that God was the creator of the world, and therefore it was in perfect unison with this design, that God said to the Jews, "keep my Sabbaths" for a sign that your God is the true God. As to those passages in which Moses is said to have given them the Sabbath, the argument is still less conclusive. For Nehemiah, in the passage referred to, says: "Thou gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, by the hand of Moses thy servant." Were all these right judgments and good statutes, said to be given by Moses, unknown before his time? The reverse is notoriously the case. Christ even says, "Moses gave unto you circumcision," though it was of the fathers, and customary long before Moses was born. Such passages no more prove that the Sabbath was instituted by Moses, than they prove that the Hebrews were ignorant of the many moral precepts which he gave them, or of the multitude of usages which he adopted and enforced. The argument from Deut. v. 15, in which the Jews were commanded to keep the Sabbath, because God had delivered them from the land of Egypt, has already been answered. They were to keep it, not in commemoration of that event, but they were to give this opportunity for rest to all their servants, because God had thus interposed to give them rest. The remembrance of their former sufferings should make them kind. These are the objections to the belief that God "sanctified the seventh

day" from the beginning. That they are of little force, we think must be admitted. And, therefore, all the direct evidence in favour of the early origin of the institution, which we have adduced, remains unimpaired. But Dr. Paley himself says, "If the divine command was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed, no doubt, to the whole human species alike, and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it."—*Moral Philosophy*, p. 247. That it was thus delivered, we think we have proved; that it has been subsequently repealed, it becomes those who deny its continued obligation clearly to establish. The necessity of an express repeal is the stronger, because the principle that a command is to be considered binding as long as the ground or reason of it remains, applies here in its full force. All moral precepts are immutable, because the ground on which they rest is immutable. The commands, "Thou shalt not kill," "Honour thy father and thy mother," arising out of the unchanging relations of society, must remain in force as long as these relations subsist. And the command to love God must be binding as long as rational creatures are in being. We have seen that the design of the Sabbath was to secure the continued worship of the true God, and must therefore be binding as long as this obligation continues, unless it be shown that the command has been repealed, and other means appointed for securing this great end.

The arguments of those who assert that the law of the Sabbath is no longer obligatory, are either derived from the general principle that all Jewish laws, as such, are repealed, or from some specific declarations of the New Testament writers. The principal dependence is placed on the assumption that the Sabbath was peculiarly a Jewish institution, and therefore ceased to be obligatory, when the law of Moses was abrogated. That this assumption is unauthorised, we have already endeavoured to prove. A precept having been adopted and incorporated with the Hebrew laws, did not take it out of the class to which it originally belonged, or alter its relation to other nations. This is confessedly the case with all moral precepts which were in force before the law of Moses enacted them, and which continue after that law, as such, ceases to be binding. And this is also true of every law the ground or reason of which continues. The remark, therefore, of Dr. Paley, which the Reviewer quotes, "If the law of the Sabbath be binding, it is binding as to the day, its duties and its penalty," is evidently unfounded. Shall we say that the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," if binding at all, must be binding as to its penalty as well as its precept; and that every adulterer must be punished with death? Surely not. Whatever was purely Jewish fell when that system fell; whatever was of prior obligation remains, unless positively repealed. It is precisely on this ground Christians place the law of the Sabbath. Everything as to duties or penalties which were attached to it, and which had a

peculiar reference to the circumstances of the Hebrews, or which arose out of them, is no longer obligatory on us. Hence we are not bound to offer sacrifices on that day as they were, nor are we exposed to the punishment which they incurred, for every violation of a fundamental principle of their theocratical system. Further than this, it is evident, the abrogation of the Mosaic law cannot affect the law of the Sabbath; its original claims remain unaffected. The very position which this command occupies in the Mosaic institutions, shows that it was not considered as one of those positive or ceremonial enactments, which were to remain only until the Messiah appeared. It is presented in the midst of moral precepts of confessedly permanent obligation; it was inscribed on the tables of stone; it followed immediately those precepts which refer to our duty to God as enjoining the means by which the love, obedience and worship which belong to him were to be secured and preserved. It is thus *custos primae tabulae*. If the Sabbath, therefore, be not a peculiarly Jewish institution, the repeal of the Jewish law does not impair our obligation to observe it. There are, however, some passages in the New Testament which are appealed to as proving that the observance of a day devoted to religion is no longer obligatory. There are only two of much importance. The one is Colossians ii. 10. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a festival *ἢ περὶ ἑορτῆς*, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." In explaining any passage of this kind, we must of course bear in mind the circumstances of the persons to whom it was addressed. Almost all the early Christian churches were composed of converts both from the Jews and heathen. The former were, naturally, so much attached to their own law, that it was with difficulty they could be brought to relinquish its observance. Hence, in all the churches founded by the Apostles, there was continual difficulty on this subject. Judaizing teachers abounded everywhere, who insisted on the necessity of conforming to the Mosaic institutions. Paul occupies a large share of his several epistles in counteracting these men. He exhorts Christians to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free; severely reproveth those who suffered themselves to be led into the observance of Jewish rites; and bids them, as in this passage to the Colossians, not to let any man presume to condemn them for not keeping the law of Moses. That this is the simple and full meaning of the passage is evident, because this was the very subject of controversy at Colosse, and because the things here specified, meats, drinks and festivals, were all of them prescriptions of that law. It is clear, therefore, from this passage, that the Sabbath, as a Jewish festival, was no more binding than the feast of the new moon, or the distinction between clean and unclean meats. But this is saying nothing more than all Christians admit; that the law of Moses, as such, is no longer obligatory. By the *Sabbaths* here mentioned (although that term is often used generally for all solemn feasts),



is meant the seventh day of every week. The observance of this day no one holds to be binding. The name *Sabbath* was distinctively applied to that day. Hence the early Christian fathers earnestly dehort their hearers from keeping the Sabbath; insist upon it, that it is no longer obligatory; while they urge upon them the religious observance of the Lord's day. Thus Ignatius' *Epis. ad Magnes.*, c. ix. 10, says: It is altogether unfit for Christians to live as do the Jews, and, therefore, they should not keep the Sabbath (*μηκὲρ σαββαρίζοντες*) but live in accordance with the Lord's day. This is their constant language. Are we to infer from this that they felt themselves free from all obligation to devote one day in seven to God's service, while they were urging, in the same breath, the observance of such a day? Clearly not. Therefore, while the passage before us is a warrant for Christians not to keep the seventh day, which was the Sabbath, it affords no evidence that the great obligation to devote one day in seven to God has been repealed.

The other passage is one of similar import in Rom. xiv. 1, 2, 3. "Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." To what days does the apostle here refer? Clearly to the festivals of the old dispensation. The Jewish converts thought they ought to observe them; the Gentiles thought they ought not. Paul tells them it was a matter of indifference, that every man should be fully settled in his own mind, and act accordingly, and not condemn those who acted differently. The reviewer has too much knowledge of the rules of construction, to suppose that this passage is to be taken out of its connexion, and assumed to mean all that the words themselves will possibly bear. This case is precisely parallel with the declaration of Christ, "I say unto you swear not at all," i. e., take no such oaths as were the subject of discourse. That judicial oaths were not intended is plain, because Christ himself afterwards took such an oath, and so did his disciples. If a fair construction of the Saviour's command frees it from the objection of condemning what he sanctioned by his own example, we cannot refuse to see, that when Paul tells the Roman Christians the observance or non-observance of particular days was a matter of indifference, he meant the declaration to be applied to the subject of discourse, and that he had no reference to a precept which had been in force from the creation of the world. That he had no such reference is still clearer, from the fact that we find him, and the Christians whom he instructed, actually distinguishing one day from another, by consecrating the Lord's day to religious services. There is the same evidence, therefore, that Paul did not mean to declare the weekly observance of a day for the worship of God a matter of indifference, as there is that Christ did not mean to condemn judicial oaths, when he said, "Swear not at all."

The obligation, therefore, to devote one day in seven to the service of our Maker, has not been repealed in the New Testament. The observance of the seventh day, or "Sabbath," has been abolished. As the keeping of that day was in commemoration of the first creation, it was evidently proper when the second or moral creation was effected by Christ, that the latter event should be the particular object of commemoration. Do we, then, actually find the inspired founders of our religion, and the churches under their immediate direction, neglecting the Jewish Sabbath, consecrating the first day of the week to divine worship? This question even Dr. Paley answers in the affirmative. Our Saviour rose from the dead on that day, and twice met his assembled apostles on "the first day of the week." This would in itself be of little consequence were these two instances of religious convocation not the first of a series continuing unbroken throughout every age and section of the church. An observance thus commenced, and thus continued, we cannot but consider as an authoritative declaration that the great command to devote one day in seven to God was recognised by Christ and his apostles as still obligatory on Christians. We accordingly find in the New Testament, that the churches of the apostolic age did observe the first day of the week. In Acts xx. 7, it is recorded that when Paul was at Troas, "On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them." Here then are the Christians of Asia Minor observing this day, under the direction of the apostle. In the first epistle to the Corinthians, xvi. 1, Paul says, "As I have given order to the churches in Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one lay by him in store," &c. In this passage, it is clearly intimated, that both in Galatia and Corinth, churches founded by the apostle, the first day of the week was the day of religious convocation. In Rev. i. 10, St. John says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." By this expression, the prevalent one in the early ages for the first day of the week, there can be no reasonable doubt that Sunday is intended. The phrase itself would seem to imply that the day was consecrated to divine service, as in the expressions, the Lord's supper, the Lord's house, this idea is conveyed.

That this day was religiously observed by the early Christians, admits of the most satisfactory proof. Our limits do not allow us here to adduce the evidence of this fact in detail; we must therefore again refer the reader to the works mentioned in a former part of this article. We shall cite only one or two passages. Barnabas, one of the apostolic fathers, argues that even in the Old Testament, God had expressed his dissatisfaction with the Jewish Sabbath, and by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, proved that a new order of things was introduced, therefore he says, "we observe the eighth day, on which Jesus having arisen from the dead ascended up to heaven."—C. 15. Justin Martyr, Apo. ii., p. 99, says, "We all meet together on Sunday, on which God having changed

darkness and matter, created the world, and on this day Jesus Christ our Saviour arose from the dead." Dionysius of Corinth, speaking of the first day of the week, says, "To-day we observe the Lord's holy day."—See Eusebius, lib. iv., c. 23. Origen, Hom., vii. in Exod., says, "That manna was rained down from heaven on the Lord's day, and not on the Sabbath, to show the Jews that even then the Lord's day was preferred before it." Tertullian and John of Damascus both argue at length against the observance of the Sabbath, and declare that Christians consecrate the first day of the week to God. The law of the Sabbath they say, Christ in part repealed (i. e., as to the day, &c.), and in part spiritualized. "We then," adds the latter, "celebrate the perfect rest of the human race, that is, the day of the resurrection, on which the Lord Jesus, the author of life and salvation, has introduced us into the inheritance," &c.—*De Fide Orth.*, lib. iv., c. 24. Athanasius, Opera, tom. i., p. 1060, says, "Formerly among the ancients the Sabbath was honourable, but the Lord transferred the Sabbath to the Lord's day." And soon after adds, "We therefore honour the Lord's day on account of the resurrection." It was a common slander against the early Christians, often repelled by the fathers, that they worshipped the sun because they kept Sunday holy : which Tertullian says they did, "alia longe ratione quam de religione solis." In allusion to the consecration of this day among the heathen to the sun, Ambrose, Serm. 62, says, "Dominica nobis venerabilis, atque solennis, quod in ea Salvator velut sol oriens discussis inferorum tenebris luce resurrectionis emicuit : ac propterea ipsa dies ab hominibus saeculi *Dies solis* vocatur, quod ortus eam Sol justitiae Christus illuminet." The first day of the week was often called *Dies panis*, because the Lord's supper was celebrated on every return of it. It was also called the "Queen of days," βασιλίσσα τῶν ἡμερῶν. "Let every Christian," says Ignatius, "keep the Lord's day, the resurrection day, the queen, the chief of all days." The most common, and the most appropriate appellation was the Lord's day. This expression, as used with emphasis by the ancients, imports, says Augusti, vol. iii., p. 351, "the day appointed in place of the Sabbath by Christ, the founder of the new covenant, and 'Lord of the Sabbath,' on which men could as well worship God as on the seventh day, which Jewish superstition had desecrated ; and on which men should joyfully call to mind the resurrection of Christ and the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit." This day, according to the institutions of the early church, was to be a day of religious joy and thanksgiving. No fasting was ever allowed on Sunday, for this was considered tantamount to a denial of the resurrection of Christ ; all prayers were to be offered up in a standing posture ; all public and private business was to be suspended ; all games forbidden ; religious assemblies, even in times of persecution, frequented ; and even the previous evening was to be spent religiously as a preparation for its sacred duties.

If, then, from the creation of the world, God commanded men



to devote one day in seven to his worship ; if this command was introduced into the decalogue and enforced upon the Old Testament church with peculiar strictness ; if Christ and his Apostles, the churches founded and instructed by their care, and Christians in all ages, have continued to recognise this command ; and if the institution be as important for the preservation of religion and good morals as we have endeavoured to show ; then it is evident, that the neglect or desecration of this day is the violation of one of the strongest of our obligations, and destructive to the best interests of society.

We have now seen that, according to the opinion of the Christian church in all ages and among all important denominations, the Lord's day ought to be devoted to rest and the worship of God. This rest is not to be absolute, for that some works are lawful on this day, has never been questioned. Even the superstitious Jews admitted this, and, after one sad lesson, determined to defend themselves at least on the Sabbath. Our Saviour clearly lays down the principle on which we are to decide such cases of exception, when he says, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," and again, "God will have mercy and not sacrifice." The principle contained in these declarations, and which he applies himself in several instances, is, that when two obligations interfere, the stronger destroys the weaker. This is an universal principle in morals. As a general duty, children are bound to obey their parents, but when this obedience would interfere with their duty to God, the obligation ceases ; so that it is no violation of filial duty to refuse to obey a parent, who requires what God forbids. In like manner our Saviour teaches us the obligation to rest on the Sabbath ceases, when a higher obligation requires us to labour. The priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and were blameless. Every man might loose his ox and lead him away to watering. It is on this principle that Christ vindicates himself for having healed the sick, and his disciples for plucking ears of corn and eating them. This latitude of interpretation the nature of the law requires ; so that we are not allowed, but bound to perform works of necessity and mercy. In deciding on the cases which come under either of these classes of exception, every man must judge for himself, and on his own responsibility. The petitioners to Congress against carrying the mail on Sunday, never pretended to assume any other ground. They merely presented themselves at the bar of that body to say that, in their judgment, carrying the mail was not a work of necessity, and, therefore, did not come within the exception. When the Reviewer, therefore, himself takes this ground, and presses it with so much coarseness on the attention of the petitioners, he gives himself much gratuitous trouble. They are as well aware as he can be, that the whole question is one of construction ; that the point at issue is, whether the carrying the mail on Sunday is a work of so much consequence, that we are freed from the obligation to devote that

day to the service of God, in order to effect it. The petitioners think not; and, in our estimation, for very sufficient reasons. They take it for granted, that the pressure of the necessity must be proportionate to the extent of the interference with the object of the day. Although rescuing an ox might be a sufficient reason why his owner should devote the requisite time and labour, it would be a very poor reason why a whole neighbourhood should neglect the religious duty of the day. Due attention to this principle would have led the Reviewer to see there was little force or propriety in most of his caustic arguments *ad hominem*, on this subject. The degree of attention which Christians devote to the decency and comfort of domestic arrangements, involves so slight an interference with the duties of the Sabbath, as to be fully justifiable on their own principles. To justify a work, however, which gives constant employment to thousands in a manner entirely incompatible with its religious observance, and which leads to the partial employment of many millions more, must require a necessity pressing in the extreme. The petitioners do not believe that any such necessity exists for carrying the mail on Sunday; on the contrary, they believe that incalculably more harm than good results from it. Those who entertain this opinion amount to some millions, unquestionably, in this country—men who belong to the best educated, the most moral, and in every respect most estimable classes of society. It is not in the power of any man, by scoffs and ridicule, to render the opinion of such a body of men unworthy of respect; and every such attempt must recoil on its author.

The petitioners are confirmed in their opinion that no such necessity exists, as can authorize this extensive and demoralizing disregard of the Sabbath, by the fact that, in the earlier periods of our national existence, the post-offices were closed, and the mail was but partially carried on Sunday, and yet no dreadful inconvenience resulted. They know too, that in the immense commercial metropolis of England, no mail departs or is distributed on Sunday. Such facts speak louder than theories or mere prognostications. They observe, moreover, that our government is very inconsistent in this respect. They see that all our legislative and judicial proceedings are suspended on the Sabbath throughout the whole country; and they cannot doubt that this is done at an immense sacrifice of time and money to the community. Thousands are kept waiting the proceedings of these bodies; are prevented receiving what in justice belongs to them; prisoners are detained in vile durance, and the whole march of business is arrested. They cannot perceive why it is, if in the opinion of the community, and of the government too, all these inconveniences are to be cheerfully endured, rather than interfere with the day devoted to religion, the evil arising from stopping the mail on that day, should be regarded as enough to justify a total disregard of it. They believe the inconvenience, in the former case, is much greater than it could be in the latter. They, therefore, beg their

representatives to be consistent, and to extend the respect they so properly pay to the Sabbath in all other departments of the government, to that of the post-office. In answer to this reasonable request, to their utter amazement, they are met on the one hand, with grave arguments to show that Congress have not the constitutional power to do, in regard to the mail, what they do in regard to every branch of the government; and on the other, still more to their surprise, they are overwhelmed with injurious reflections on their motives, general defamation of their character, and insulting ridicule and taunts. With regard to this latter course, we shall say but little. The former, alone, deserves consideration.

It has, indeed, somewhat ungenerously perhaps, occurred to us, that it was not possible for such men as the chairman of the committee of Congress, and the reputed author of the article in the American Quarterly Review, either to blind themselves, or hope to blind others by the sophistry employed on this subject. We find, however, the editor of the Review, in a recent number of the National Gazette, gravely recommends the said article, though he gives up its theology, to the serious attention of members of Congress, as a decisive argument on the question. We are free to confess that we are entirely incapable of discovering either the force or consistency of the Reviewer's arguments. On page 189, he says, "The man, or set of men, who say that I shall not ride or walk or sail into the country, because he adjudges these things to be breaches of the law, having thus determined what I shall *not do*, will next say what I *shall do*, will direct that I shall go to church, and then that I shall go to *his* church, &c. If the point now disputed be carried or yielded, the progress of the same power to the point suggested, will have no new principle or impediment to overcome in its way. Everything is gained over any rights of conscience and religious freedom when a single point is carried against them." The argument here is, that it is inconsistent with religious freedom for the government to undertake to decide that the Reviewer shall not receive his letters or papers on Sunday, because if this be allowed, it may order him to go to church, decide for him what church, &c. That there is a fallacy somewhere in this argument, is evident. The government, as well state as general, does undertake to tell that gentleman that he shall not hold a court, if a judge; or plead a cause, if a lawyer; or prosecute a suit, if a client, on that day. However inconvenient the delay, he must wait. The government, moreover, does tell merchants and tradesmen, they shall not buy nor sell on Sunday; that their stores must be closed on that day. Where, then, is the difference between these cases? Why may not the government as well tell the people that it will not allow its post-masters to distribute letters, as forbid its judges to administer the law on Sunday? Where is the difference in principle? We cannot perceive any. And what is more to the point, the Reviewer cannot. He entirely abandons the ground here assumed, of a constitutional



difficulty, in his answer to the *North American Review*. "It is true," he says, "that the other offices of government do generally suspend their operations on Sunday; and that the post-office does not. We have suggested the reason, which we shall show is the true one, and is wholly independent of any supposed religious obligation, or imperative command of Him, who should be obeyed in all things. [A declaration contradicted in the next sentence.] The difference of practice in these branches is founded on the difference of their duties, which allows of the permitted or PRESCRIBED rest from labour in the one case, and does not allow it in the other." "Sunday is observed as a day of rest and worship, unless some public or private necessity or utility warrants a dispensation; and the dispensation must be commensurate with the necessity or utility which demands it."—Pp. 190 and 191. The Reviewer has here strangely forgotten himself. This is the whole doctrine of the "terrorists;" the length and breadth of Calvinistic rigour on the subject. There is not a man amongst us, who goes one jot beyond this; Sunday is to be observed as a day of rest and worship, unless necessity or utility warrants a dispensation. Has any man ever maintained that God requires us to rest on the Sabbath, when necessity requires us to labour? The Reviewer, therefore, in acknowledging (what, indeed, he could not deny) that the government does respect Sunday as a day of rest and worship, whenever it can do so, has entirely given up the ground that there is any constitutional difficulty in the case. He admits that no new principle is to be recognised, but that the whole question is, whether a principle already acknowledged shall be applied to a specified case. In doing this, he acknowledges that all the abuse which he and others have heaped upon the petitioners for applying for an unconstitutional exercise of power, is utterly unfounded. The principle which he admits is properly recognised by the government, has been acted upon since its formation. It has been adopted by every State in the Union, and by every incorporated town which has made any municipal laws to regulate the observance of the Lord's day. Unless the Reviewer will maintain that government from the first, has been trampling on the rights of conscience and religious liberty, he must retract his censures, and admit the futility of his own arguments and those of the chairman of the post-office committee. How this latter gentleman, with any seriousness, could ask, as an argument on this subject, how government was to accommodate all classes of the community, Jews, Mahometans, seventh day Baptists, &c.? we are at a loss to conceive. Why does he not wonder how all these classes are suited at present with government respecting Sunday, as our Reviewer tells him it very properly does, in every branch excepting the post-office? Can he not see that if they would have any ground of complaint if the latter department was closed on that day, they have the same ground already? The truth is, however, they would have no reason to complain in either case, as we shall presently show.

We are equally at a loss to imagine how a gentleman of any discrimination could ask, "Why the petitioners have confined their prayer to the mail; why they have not requested that government should be required to suspend all its executive functions on that day; why they have not required that our ships of war should not sail; that our armies should not march; that the officers of justice should not seize the suspected or guard the convicted?" The petitioners will allow our Reviewer to answer him. Sunday is to be observed as a day of rest and worship, unless necessity warrants a dispensation. Consequently, to ask why the petitioners think one thing is necessary, when they don't think another so, is not a very pungent question. It might as well be asked, why they think it wrong to work on Sunday, if they think it right to take a cup of water? Yet this is what the Reviewer calls a cogent appeal! He somewhere remarks, that "honest and sincere men become so absorbed and infatuated with their own notions," as to lose all power of discrimination. If he wishes the benefit of this remark, we must in courtesy grant it.

The truth is, the grand mistake of the chairman and the reviewer in all their arguments on this subject is, they think themselves heathen, whereas, they are Christians; members of a Christian community, and bound to act accordingly. If they consider this a misfortune, they can only help the matter by making the majority of the same mind. But as long as the great mass of the people profess the Christian religion, so long must government respect that religion. Our legislature, and every other governing body, are under a two-fold obligation as it regards religion. They are themselves bound as individuals and as legislators, to act in accordance with the great principles of moral and religious obligation. This is a duty they owe to God. And they are, moreover, obliged to respect the religion of those for whom they legislate. They have no right to order the violation, on their part, of any of its precepts. This latter obligation is irrespective of the nature of that religion. The British government in India has never pretended to the right, nor would they dare to assume it, of requiring the Hindoos to act contrary to their faith. And the Emperor Nicholas is obliged to accommodate his laws to his Mohammedan subjects, as far as they are concerned. From the fact that our constitution has wisely placed religion beyond its jurisdiction, it has been strangely inferred that those who act under it, are authorized to legislate as though the people had no religion. This is the fallacy of all the reviewer's arguments on this point. The people, in reserving the care of this subject to themselves, never intended thereby to authorize the government in making laws for them, to trample on their religious opinions. All they desire, and all the petitioners desire, is, that CONGRESS WOULD LET THE MATTER ALONE. As they have no right to pass any law in support of religion, so they are not authorized to make any which interferes with it. If it be proper for them to pass a law which requires thousands to disregard the Sabbath, or

submit to certain disabilities, it is competent to them to pass an act which visits with similar pains any man who goes to church. So long as it cannot be denied that Congress legislates for a Christian people, any law which requires the violation of the Christian religion is oppressive and unjust. But it is asked what government is to do when the people are of different religions? We answer, the principles which should regulate the movements of government in such cases, are perfectly obvious. In the first place, it should interfere as little as possible with the opinions of any party. It should pass no law, except in cases of necessity, which requires the violation of the precepts of any form of religion its citizens may adopt. Secondly, as it is clearly impossible to avoid this evil entirely, where there are Atheists, Deists, Christians, and Jews, living together, that course must be pursued which will produce the least injustice. In a Jewish country, the Jews are to be principally regarded, and in a Christian country, Christians. The plain principle is, that the religion of the country is to be respected. By religion of the country is meant, not an established religion, but that which the mass of the people profess. Unless this be regarded, intolerable oppression must be the result. Acting on the principle assumed by the chairman and the reviewer, that the government are to pay as little regard to Christianity as to Judaism, that is, to the interests of thirteen millions, as those of a few hundred, would only multiply the evil an hundred fold. It would disfranchise all the sincere Christians in the land, without the least benefit to the Jews. But the fact is, no government could exist which acted on this principle. Our own has always been wise enough to know that they were legislating for Christians, and to act accordingly. They, therefore, have, in practice and by laws, recognised Christianity, and disregarded Judaism. They have acknowledged a God, and a future state of retribution, to the confusion of the Atheist and the Universalist. These "theological points" the government takes for granted as embraced in the religion of the people, and proceeds upon them as settled. The principle of the chairman is completely and radically revolutionary. It would change the whole practice of the government, and overturn it from its very foundations. Let Congress once announce to the people that they are to be treated as Atheists; that their most sacred rights and opinions are to be trampled in the dust; and our government is at an end. This recurrence to first principles, in matters of government, and pushing them, even when correct, to extremes, is of all courses the most dangerous, and yet one of the most common with men of ardent and inconsiderate minds. Because a man's religious opinions are sacred, and the rights of conscience inviolable, it is inferred that the government can pay no regard to Jews, Turks, Christians, or Infidels, but drive on blindfold, careless whether its laws clash with the opinions of the hundred or the million. Yet, acting on this plan would be absurd and impossible. The same is true with regard to the liberty of the press, the invio-



lability of property, and other essential or conventional rights. They are of necessity limited and restricted, when men live in society; and pressing any of them to extremes would ruin any community in the world.

Setting aside, therefore, the obligation which Congress, as Christians, are themselves under to obey the precepts of Christianity, it is obvious that as long as they are the legislators of the Christian people, they have no right to pass a law which requires the violation of any of its commands. This, in the judgment of the petitioners, they have done; and of this they complain. Is it a crime, then, to represent to Congress, that by any law of theirs they encroach upon the rights of their constituents, that they require of them what their religion forbids? The reviewer, however, tells us that this is not the case; that every man is free to act as he pleases. "He is not called upon to *do what he thinks wrong*; nor is he *prohibited from doing what he thinks right*." "No one requires him to depart a jot from his principles, or to violate his sense of duty." The law does not force him to be a mail contractor, nor a postmaster; neither does it require him to get his letters or papers on Sunday. This is all true. Let us apply this principle to other cases. Suppose a law passed ordering both houses of Congress to sit on Sunday; the president, heads of departments, all clerks and minor officers, all judges from the highest to the lowest, to disregard the Sabbath; and then Congress to tell their Christian constituents that they need not act against their conscience; the law does not require any man to be either a senator or a representative; nor does it force him to accept of any office, from the president to a tide-waiter. If any of them have a cause pending in court, they need not prosecute it on Sunday; should it happen to be called up, they can easily submit to be non-suited. A lawyer need not take a case likely to come to trial on that day. All that such persons have to do is to renounce all places of honour, power or profit: submit to be defrauded at every turn, and allow those "less scrupulous" to govern them. Strange liberty and equality, this, in a Christian country! This course, which would disfranchise millions of the people; which would visit religious opinions with civil pains and penalties the most disgraceful; which would be a test-act of infidelity, according to the principles of the reviewer, is true liberty, good enough, at least, for petitioners. We rather suspect those same Calvinists whom the reviewer beards so unceremoniously, would find such a law as hard to bear as they did the stamp-act of old. That such enactments are in fact test-acts, needs no proof. Any law which prevents access to office to men of a certain creed, is a religious test. Our reviewer might have comforted the Irish Catholics, as he now consoles American Christians, by telling them they were "not required to do what they thought wrong, nor prohibited from doing what they thought right." What could they wish more? They need not take the offensive oath; all they had to do was to stay out of parliament, and let the less

scrupulous manage matters for them. Strange doctrine for free-men! Strange instructions for an American Congress! It is undeniable, that the post-office law, as far as it goes, is a law of proscription, a religious test administered to every servant of the department. So far, therefore, is the assertion, that the petitioners apply for a law to deprive any man of a right, from being correct, that their application is only for the repeal of an act which deprives a large body of our fellow-citizens of their rights. But the reviewer tells us he has a right to have his letters on Sunday, and therefore a law forbidding him to get them is injurious and oppressive. If he has this right, it is more than any other man in the land has. Who gave him the right in a Christian country, to require the government, or any individual, to wait on him on Sunday? Must other people violate their sense of duty for his accommodation? Has he a right to have a cause tried on Sunday? Can he force Congress to receive a petition or perform any of its functions, on that day, in his behalf? If not, whence does he get the right to make government carry letters for him, or to employ persons to deliver them on Sunday? No such right exists.

The fact is, the reviewer knows, as well as we do, that all his arguments on this head are not worth a straw. He cannot help knowing it; because he himself has placed the whole subject on its proper basis. He tells us that Sunday, in this country, is to be respected by the people and government, as a day devoted to rest and worship, except when public or private necessity forbids. And, consequently, the whole question about the mail is, whether this necessity exists. If this be once made out, there is not a Christian in the land who would utter a syllable of objection. As this, according to his own showing, is the real point at issue, he must be able to see, that all arguments to prove that granting the prayer of the petitioners would be an interference with the rights of conscience, and requires an unconstitutional exercise of power, are in direct contradiction to his own doctrine, and bear with all their force on the practice of government in all the other departments. He must see, too, that if his principles were applied to the other branches of the State, the result would be a most odious proscription and tyranny, a test-act more offensive than has ever yet disgraced a Christian country.

We have dwelt on this subject much longer than we at first intended. It is, however, one of incalculable importance. Did the petitioners not believe that the Sabbath was divinely appointed, as the great means of preserving religion and good morals, that its influence was essential to the well-being of society, Congress would never have heard one word of remonstrance or complaint. No selfish motive can, with the least semblance of truth, be imputed to them. If stopping the mail on Sunday would occasion all the inconvenience which is predicted, they would bear their full share of the burden. Seeking such an object as the best interests of their country, by means obviously just and proper, is surely not

a crime of sufficient magnitude to justify the amount of vulgar abuse which has been heaped upon them. So long as this was confined to papers confessedly hostile to all religion, and to many of the most sacred institutions of society, it was not a matter of surprise. Nor did we wonder that the chairman of the committee of Congress should allow himself to stray from the real point in hand, into a disquisition on the diversity of religious creeds, and the value of religious liberty. Such things are common in reports. But that a work, of the standing of the American Quarterly Review, should present its readers, not with a fair discussion of the question at issue, but with an article in which the religious principles of a large part of the community are ridiculed, their motives vilified, and their general character defamed, is a matter of unmingled regret. It would seem as though, by a strange mishap, some stray sheets from pens under the influence of a nameless female, had found their way into the mahogany escritoir of the unsuspecting editor. The *tone* of a book cannot be quoted. A specimen we are bound to give, to justify a charge so serious, and so derogatory to the respectability of the work. On page 186, the following passage occurs: "It is your *man-gods*, who make such laws, and impiously assume the power to condemn and inflict awful penalties upon those they shall adjudge to violate them; while with a most impudent self-complacency, they find an expiatory apology for their own deviations. The stern and cruel severity with which these self-righteous expounders of the law visit its utmost rigours upon all who dissent from their opinions, warrants us in probing their pretensions to the quick; and in searching their lives to see if the fruit shows the tree to be better than those they would cut down and cast into the fire. Admitting that there are pure and bright examples of a good life among the terrorists—not, however, more or better than are found among their opponents—if we look at them individually, we shall see them, GENERALLY, as devoted to worldly wealth and enjoyments; as solicitous for distinction and influence; as easily and happily puffed with pride and conceit; and as mere creatures of flesh, as those they pity or spurn, because, forsooth, their pretensions to sanctity are not so lofty—or their notions of Christianity so mysterious as their own; nor their observances and deportment squared by the rule they have adopted. They are as impatient of injuries; as vindictive in their passions; as unforgiving in their temper; as sordid and penurious; as keen, close and avaricious in their dealings; as hard creditors; as inflexible and un pitying in exacting their rights. But all this offends no law of the land, and is not forbidden by the Decalogue, as they interpret it; but to step into a steamboat on Sunday! that is the fatal sin, and must be expiated by eternal torments. The religion of such men is satisfied by a hard and austere observance of the Sabbath, which happens to fall in with their taste; by professing a belief in certain sectarian tenets, which they do not understand; with occasional ostentatious donations to institutions which flatter



their vanity by adulatory resolutions, and give them importance by a pompous publication of their piety and generosity."\* Such language the petitioners may well pity, and will, doubtless, readily forgive; more readily, we trust, than the reviewer can forgive himself, or regain his self-respect. On page 190, he says, "Assuredly, a Calvinist would hold it to be a much more important service to religion, to prohibit all men from an attendance on an Unitarian or Catholic church, than to stop the mails and steamboats on Sunday; and, therefore, in his own principles of duty, he would not only be willing, but bound to prevent it, if he could. *And he refrains from the attempt, only because there is a stronger power over him;* but if he can hoodwink or break that power in the one case, there is no security in it for any other; and we shall hold all these rights, not on guarantee of the Constitution, but at the discretion of legislatures, to be acted upon by popular feeling and interests." This is a bold assertion, not with that boldness which is required to meet danger with unconcern, but that which enables a man calmly to contradict truth and history to the face. There are several millions of Calvinists in this country, and the assertion is not true of any one of them, we verily believe. Before the reviewer can prove that Calvinists are particularly inclined to tyranny, he must blot out all the record of the past. They have, notoriously, been the staunch advocates and champions of liberty. The Calvinist Hampden was pleading and dying for the liberty of the world, while the infidel Hobbes was writing and raving for passive obedience. The liberty secured by Calvinists has given birth to all the world now enjoys. Calvinists† gave the world the Reformation, and England her constitution. They have ever been in advance of the rest of the world in the principles of toleration. Do Unitarians suffer from Calvinists here, in the nineteenth century, what Calvinists are now suffering from Unitarians in Switzerland? Take them, age for age, with others, and for the solitary victim to their bigotry you will find hecatombs of martyrs. No man, with the light of history before his eyes, would hesitate to prefer leaving life, honour, or property, in the hands of the strictest Calvinists of the age, rather than in the power of those "less scrupulous" personages, whom the reviewer has taken under his especial favour.

\* The committee of the House of Representatives, speaking of these same persons, say, "It is believed, that the history of legislation in this country affords no instance in which a stronger expression has been made, if regard be had to the numbers, wealth, or the intelligence of the petitioners."

† In the sense of the reviewer.

## ESSAY XX.

### BODILY EFFECTS OF RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENT.\*

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DURING the years 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803, a revival of religion occurred in the southern and western sections of Kentucky, or what is generally known as the Green River country. The principal instruments were the Rev. Messrs. M'Gready, Hodge, Rankin, and M'Gee. The first named individual was in the van. He was a devout, evangelical, powerful preacher; a pupil of Dr. M'Millan, lately deceased. These men, let it be recollected, were the original leaders and abettors of the subsequent irregularities and disorders of the Cumberland Presbytery, which will be noticed hereafter. Previous to this revival of religion, Kentucky, and all this western region, was in a state of great coldness and declension. The country was new, and a heterogeneous mass from all quarters had pressed into it. Presbyterians, both clergy and people, were very formal. Sacramental services were very long, and often irksome, and apparently unedifying, or rather uninteresting, to the large mass of attendants. Communicants were heads of families generally; rarely was there to be seen a young person at the Lord's table. The services were conducted on the plan suggested in our Directory for Worship, chap. viii., sec. 6. The Sabbath was occupied in preaching, fencing, and serving the tables, as it was called, from five to eight hours. The communion was held twice in the year in those churches which had stated pastors or supplies, and in many churches only once in the year. Such was the state of things when the revival commenced, which was some time in the year 1799, in the region before mentioned. The population there was sparse at that time, and widely scattered. The work, at first, was no doubt a glorious work of the Spirit of God. The calls for ministerial labour were so great and extensive, that it was impossible for the few clergymen, recently settled there, to supply the demand. This circumstance suggested the idea of protracted meetings; that the ministers might have the opportuni-

\* The article here reprinted was originally in the form of a letter, from one who was well acquainted with the facts detailed. These are highly instructive, and ought to be recorded and remembered for the benefit of the coming generation.

ty of meeting people at one time and one place. There were then no missionaries to go from place to place, and preach to the scattered population. And, inasmuch as no neighbourhood had a population sufficient to support so many people as assembled on those occasions, this gave rise to the plan of camp-meetings. A grove was selected; "a pulpit of wood," or, as we generally term it, a stand, for the clergy, was erected. The multitude who intended to be stationary, located themselves, with their wagons, carriages, or tents, in such places around the stand as their fancy or convenience dictated. The assembly was often so great that secondary stands were erected: the congregation divided, so that three or four preachers were discoursing at the same time, in different parts of the grove. Here was the commencement of disorder and confusion. The sermon had scarcely commenced, when some one or more would become the subject of bodily exercise. This was commonly called the falling exercise; or, as it was often said, such and such an one was "struck down." We cannot better describe this exercise than Dr. M-Millan has done, in his letter to President Carnahan. "It was no unusual thing to see a person so entirely deprived of bodily strength, that they would fall from their feet, or off their feet, and be as unable to help themselves as a new-born child. We have seen some lie in this condition for hours, who yet said that they could hear everything that was spoken, and felt their minds more composed, and more capable of attending to divine things, than when their bodies were not thus affected. As far as we could observe, the bodily exercise never preceded, but always followed, upon the mind's being deeply impressed with a sense of some divine truth." Another *fac simile*, if we may so call it, you may find in Mr. Gulick's letter, written on the Island of Kauai. See Miss. Herald, vol. xxix., p. 404. "Some were seized with a kind of convulsive trembling; and in a few cases, overcome by their feelings, they fell prostrate on their faces, and lay for a length of time weeping in a most affecting manner. And what, in our estimation at least, renders this work the more remarkable is, that many of these very persons who now felt so deeply, have, for years, been in the habit of hearing the most solemn and alarming truths in the Bible without the least apparent emotion. But now, without any special cause of excitement or alarm from us, they are thus deeply affected." But now, as we conceive, commenced the principal mischievous measure. When any one would become the subject of this bodily exercise, immediately a group would collect around, and commence singing, and then praying, and then exhorting. Many instances of this kind obtained in different parts of the congregation all at the same time. Hence it happened, that, throughout the assembly, as far as the eye could reach from the stand, there was a continual commotion and confused noise of preaching, exhorting, singing, praying, and shouting, going on at the same instant. Many, from curiosity or anxiety, were seen continually running from one group to another; so that the multitude



was in a perpetual state of commotion and agitation. This scene of things continued day and night, with little or no abatement. The ministry rather yielded up the reins to the multitude, who, being carried away with such a state of things, considered the pulpit of little account, if any at all. Indeed, preaching, especially of the didactic character, was considered a great hindrance to the progress of the revival. This sentiment was not confined exclusively to the populace, for some of the leading and most popular preachers gave way to the opinion that such kind of preaching was rather an interruption to the great work that was then going on. Hence, the most zealous, arrogant, and enthusiastic of the laity, finding the ministry ready to surrender their posts, very naturally took the whole management of the service out of their hands, and controlled it at pleasure. Moreover, if a minister, however evangelical in faith and practice, did not come "fully up to the mark," i. e., if he expressed any disapprobation, ministered any caution, attempted to correct any extravagances, he was not only set down immediately as being hostile to the revival, but even interrupted and prevented from proceeding in his discourse, by some of the multitude, who commenced singing, or praying, or exhorting, or shouting, whichever was, at the time, found most convenient, by the leaders of such disorder. It was, ultimately, out of this hot-bed of wild enthusiasm and disorder that there sprung up that fruitful crop of heresy and schism that afterwards assumed the shape, as well as the name, of New Lights, Schismatics, Marshallites, Unitarians, and Shakers. By these heresies the Synod of Kentucky was deprived of eight members, viz: Marshall and Thompson (who afterwards recanted their errors and returned), Stone, Dunlavy, M'Namer, Huston, Rankin, and Bowman. All these, except Stone and Bowman, became Shakers. For a particular account and description of bodily exercises, as they were perpetuated and fostered among the New Lights, after they became a separate and distinct body, being excluded from our church, we refer to the "Evangelical Record," p. 217, written by M'Namer, while one of that party, or perhaps after he turned Shaker. The description is indeed ludicrous, but so far as our knowledge and observation extended at the time, we cannot detect anything incorrect in the statement. We do not consider it exaggerated or too highly colored. As to these extravagances, the Presbyterian church by this time began to pause, and look on these scenes, as they were fully acted out by the New Lights, with a degree of wonder and disgust. Still there was enough, and more than enough, among ourselves, to make us blush, on a review, and excite in us a desire to hide our mother's nakedness if we could. The work was conducted by Bishop and M'Chord. We return to the revival scenes.

We have seen the origin of *camp-meetings*, which have so much importance now attached to them. They originated in the Presbyterian church from *necessity*; and this necessity, perhaps, at the time, justified the measure. And so long as they were confined to the

circumstances which seemed to call for them, were extensively accommodating, and thought to be highly beneficial. The meetings, at first, were awfully solemn; and no doubt much good was done. But when they were extended, and adopted in the more populous parts of the country, where they were attended by thousands and tens of thousands, induced by every motive good or bad, together with the lax and irregular management of them, they exhibited too much the appearance of disorder and confusion, which baffled and defied all description. It is proper to remark, however, that the form and arrangements of camp-meetings now, differ very much from those in former days. Then, the people came together without any shelter but their wagons and their tents, erected where convenience or fancy might dictate. They brought provisions for themselves and horses, and whatever else was thought necessary to their continuance on the ground for many days. Now, the plan of temporary buildings of small log huts, in regular order, around the stand, and the space where the congregation is to assemble, is adopted. Order and solemnity generally prevail, and are carefully inculcated and constantly maintained. Formerly, as we have seen, it was entirely the reverse. As for the comparative good or evil attending camp-meetings, we have nothing to say, as my acquaintance with such meetings is very limited. They appear to be lauded or condemned, according to the opinions and prejudices of their advocates or opponents.

We confess ourselves much at a loss to know the proper shape and size of the subject now before us; how far the plan of this history should extend; what to set down, and what to omit. To descend to particulars and minute circumstances, would not be agreeable to the feelings of some yet living; nor do we know that it would be edifying. We will state a few facts and anecdotes, connected with the subject before us. The writer was licensed to preach in April, 1803; both before and after which, he witnessed many things, the detail of which would make a little volume. The largest meeting he attended was in June, 1801, at Caneridge, Bourbon county, where B. W. Stone was then pastor. The exercises, as well as the encampment, were such as are described above. Many appeared to be deeply affected; and many had fallen down. There was much singing, praying, exhorting, &c., at tents, at the meeting-house, and every place where small groups were assembled around one or more of the persons who were "struck down." Subsequently, during the years 1802—3, we witnessed many cases of bodily exercise, the most of which, we have reason to believe, were entirely involuntary; while some others, we thought, were the reverse, i. e., either the persons conceited, or fancied themselves under exercise; or desired to be, and therefore sought for it, and yielded to the first impulse, which might, however, have been successfully resisted. Many persons, within my knowledge, became hopefully pious, the most of whom continue unto the present, and many have fallen asleep in Jesus. The number of apostasies was much fewer than

might be supposed. Indeed, when we look back on those times, we greatly wonder that there were not ten for one. The Presbyterian church suffered greatly, lost many members, more ministers, proportionably, than others: but she continued unconsumed, and was much better prepared, by practical knowledge, and dear-bought experience, for the next revival than she was before. But to our narrative.

A contemporary brother minister, by our request, has given us, in substance, the following facts. The first personal knowledge he had of any of the subjects of the revival was in the winter of 1800—1, near the borders of the State of Tennessee. Shortly after the people began to assemble, two or three persons appeared to swoon away, and after lying fifteen or twenty minutes, appeared to be wholly convulsed, some more than others. His attention was particularly called to a young female, who, after some time lying apparently motionless, began to move her lips. On a near approach, he found himself the subject of her prayer; from which it appeared that she was under the impression that he had come a considerable distance, and from a cold region, to see the great work that was going on in that place. And she prayed fervently that he might not be disappointed. When she recovered, and resumed her usual posture, and state of mind, there was great solicitude manifested by her minister, and others, to know the result of her exercise, what she had seen, &c. She informed them that she had seen that they were to have a glorious meeting that day, and the minister (Mr. Rankin) said he had no doubt of it. In that same place, there were others who saw, during their exercises, as they expressed themselves, certain persons (who were yet unconverted), in the act of preaching, and a very great work going on under their ministry; and they appeared to expect it with as much certainty as if it had been revealed to them from heaven. At that time and place, there was a considerable mixture of wheat and chaff. On the one hand, there was manifestly an anxious disposition to converse on religious subjects, particularly about the experience and exercises of the heart; a close attention to the preaching of the word, with apparent desire to profit thereby. There appeared among many a docile temper, a spirit of inquiry, with fervent prayer and cautious zeal. On the other hand, there was a prevailing sentiment, that the subjects of the revival had more than common attainments in evangelical knowledge and piety; that the millennium was just at hand, even at the door; of which fact these extraordinary exercises were certain precursors and evidences. These and such like extravagant notions were, of course, attended by an arrogant boldness and self-importance, which did not savour of the religion and spirit of Christ. Social meetings catechetical instruction, &c., were almost, if not altogether neglected. As before intimated, the intervals between sermons were occupied by the multitude in various exercises. The ministers took, comparatively, but little interest in conducting the worship, except in the time of



preaching, which occupied but a small portion of the twenty-four hours. The rest of the time was spent as before described, singing with great fervour and animation, shaking hands all through the crowd, praying by fifties and hundreds all at the same moment. Such scenes we have often witnessed. Young converts were often seen passing through the assembly, and on the outskirts thereof, exhorting sinners, in a very lofty tone, and peremptory manner, to fly from the wrath to come. Others would pray for hours together, until they were exhausted; and when they could stand up no longer, they would sit down, or recline on some other person, and then pray, or exhort, until completely exhausted; so that nature could exert itself no further. These exercises were greatly applauded, and highly approved, as being not only certain evidences of the gracious state of the individuals themselves, but, likewise, as eminently useful and instrumental in furthering the revival. When some of the elder brethren were inquired of about the expediency and propriety of correcting some extravagancies which appeared wild and visionary, their reply was, in substance, that they knew these things were not right; but should they interfere by attempting to rectify them at that time, it might interrupt, if not stop, the revival altogether. Here the ministry, however good the intention, was much at fault. The surrendering up the control and management of the religious exercises into the hands of mere novices, or such as were unskilful and inexperienced, was the very inlet or gateway to those errors and extravagancies that soon followed. There was, if we mistake not, one general, prevailing, prominent feature attending this revival everywhere; it was the strange, mistaken disposition, in a very large portion of the people, to undervalue the public means of religion, and, in the place thereof, to promote a kind of tumultuous exercise, in which themselves could take an active part, if not become the principal leaders. Hence, some of these would-be-leaders have been known to lie down and sleep in the time of preaching, and during some of the most serious and solemn addresses, and as soon as the sermon was over, suddenly rise to their feet, and sing, and shake hands, and pray, and exhort, with all the apparent energy of a saint or messenger from heaven. The wild fanatical notions of some were manifested by their believing themselves under obligation to go, according to certain impressions, which they considered to be from heaven; namely, that they must go to certain places, and say and do certain things, and that it must be done and said at a certain time, &c. Many such things as these, which would be tedious and unnecessary to detail here, obtained and prevailed in this revival.

We proceed to relate a case or two, respecting the exercise called the "jerks." This succeeded some time after the falling exercise, and, I believe, had its origin in East Tennessee; at least it was, to use a commercial phrase, first imported into Kentucky from that quarter. It affected the good and the bad, the aged and the

young. It was entirely involuntary, dreaded and hated, and even cursed by some; while it was desired, and courted, and highly prized by others. It came on something like the hiccough, without any premonitory symptom, and left the subject equally without any sensible effect. During its prevalence, we made several experiments; being inexperienced in the ministry, we knew not what to do with it. While preaching, we have, after a smooth and gentle course of expression, suddenly changed our voice, and language, expressing something awful and alarming, and, instantly, some dozen or twenty persons, or more, would, simultaneously, be jerked forward, where they were sitting, with a suppressed noise, once or twice, somewhat like the barking of a dog. And so it would either continue or abate according to the tenor or strain of my discourse. The strong sympathy, and intimate correspondence between the mind and body, was fully manifested, by this experiment producing the exhibition which immediately followed. The first subject of this exercise that attracted our attention, was the pious wife of one of our elders. She was affected by this operation very gently, she felt no pain whatever, but rather the reverse—a pleasing sensation—could give no satisfactory account of its operation. She went to the country village, on a public day, to do a little shopping; we accompanied her on our way home. She was entirely free from any operation of the jerks. We therefore determined to try an experiment, conversed freely and somewhat jocularly with her on secular matters, to divert her mind as far off in that direction as we thought necessary, and then immediately changed the subject to that of a very serious and solemn character. We are certain, not two minutes had elapsed, before she was considerably affected with this exercise. Her body, from the saddle and upwards, appeared to pitch forward half way to the horse's neck, six or eight times in a minute. We were fully satisfied she could not prevent it. Our mind became, some time after, greatly perplexed about this exercise. We could not encourage it, and yet, being a young minister, we were afraid to say anything against it publicly, as it had many friends and advocates. At length it was found to be detrimental in various ways; besides interrupting public worship, it deterred many from attending altogether, being impressed with the belief that it was "catching." But it was not confined to the public assembly; it invaded the private and domestic circle, while engaged in domestic business, or travelling on the road. The same individual was frequently the subject of it, young and old, male and female, refined and unrefined, the pious and the wicked, were alike under its operation.

Take another singular case, stated to us by Mr. M'Gready. A young man, son of an elder, to avoid attending a camp-meeting in the neighbourhood with the family, feigned himself sick. On the morning of the Sabbath, he continued in bed, until the family had all started for the meeting; he being left alone, except a few small

blacks. When thus alone, he congratulated himself on his success, by the deception he had practised on his parents. He raised up his head, and looking all around his room, smiled at the adventure ; but lest it might not be complete, lest some one might have occasion to linger or return, and so he be detected, he resumed his clinical position, covering over his head, and in a short time directed his thoughts towards the camp ground. He fancied the multitude assembling, the services commenced, the bodily exercises, as he had seen them, now in operation. He fancied a certain female now in full exercise ; "now she's at it, now she's at it." In a moment he was taken with the same exercise (the jerks), was hurled out of his bed, and jerked hither and thither, all around the room, up against the wall, and in every fashion. He had never been affected by bodily exercise before, but now found himself perfectly unmanageable. He had heard it said, and indeed witnessed the fact, that praying would cause the jerks to cease. He tried it ; the desired effect followed immediately. He felt no more the effects of the exercise than a person does after the hiccough. He supposed it all a dream, a mere conceit, illusion or something of the kind, resumed his bed, commenced his pranks again, and again was the scene acted over, only a little worse. The same remedy was resorted to, and he again became *in statu quo*. He arose, dressed himself, sauntered about awhile, wanted some employment to pass the time away, bethought himself of a dog-skin in the vat, that needed unhairing, drew it out, laid it on the beam, rolled up his sleeves, grasped the graining knife, lifted it up to make the first scrape, when lo, it was instantaneously flung out of his grasp, and he was jerked back, over logs, against the fence, up and down, until he resorted to his old remedy and again obtained relief. Feeling as before, perfectly free from any sensible or evil effects, as strong, and resolute, and determined, and reckless as ever, he ventured again. He assumed his instrument, and resumed his posture over the subject of his intended operation, when immediately, before he could make one stroke, the whole scene, only if possible tenfold worse, was acted over again ; it was much more severe, and greatly protracted. The usual remedy, at first, failed ; he became alarmed, thought the Lord was now about to kill him, became deeply convicted of his great folly and wickedness ; became composed again in body, but now greatly agitated and concerned in mind ; called a little black, pointed him to the dog-skin, which he was afraid now to approach, directed where to lay it away, returned to his room weeping and crying to God for mercy, and in this condition was found on the return of the family. He shortly afterward obtained a good hope through grace, applied for the privileges of the church, gave this relation of facts to the session, was received, and in the judgment of Christian charity, gave satisfactory evidence by a scriptural experience, and godly living, that he was a renewed man and redeemed sinner saved by grace.

We shall add only one case more. One evening we rode



six miles up Green river, and preached at a Mr. M'Whorter's, in a Baptist settlement. The house was crowded. The people were attentive, until we had finished the discourse and had prayed, and were about to sing the last hymn, but were forestalled by an enthusiastic kind of man, who started a song with a lively tune. Several young women began to jerk backwards and forwards. The seats were immediately removed, to afford room and prevent them from being hurt. One young woman had what we would call the whirling exercise. She went round like a top, we think at least fifty times in a minute, and continued, without intermission, for at least an hour. It exceeded by far, anything of the kind we had ever witnessed. We were told she had had the jerks nearly three years. She did not appear exhausted; complained of pain or distress if the bystanders did not continue singing. We became perfectly tired, our preaching seemed to be all gone, and to have been rather in the way, from what took place afterwards. We remonstrated with some of them, and cautioned them. Thus you see this exercise continued, more or less, in one or another place for a long time. It, however, in the general, gradually disappeared, especially from the Presbyterian church; and thus afforded us a very happy relief. We were heartily glad when it was entirely gone. After all these novelties left us, the church, like one enfeebled and exhausted, sank down into formality and apathy. After she had passed through the fire, she came forth more refined as to doctrine and soundness in the faith. For nearly twenty years afterwards was she without a revival. But blessed be God, she has recovered, and her borders have been greatly enlarged, and her stakes strengthened; and we trust in God she will never see and feel such another shock. In her wisdom and experience, we believe such things will never find favour and encouragement again.

The Cumberland business was the last difficulty we had to struggle with. The original Cumberland Presbytery was one of our own, formed by the Synod from Transylvania Presbytery, and shortly after dissolved, being incapable of transacting business. M'Gready and Hodge acknowledged and renounced their ecclesiastical aberrations; Rankin turned Shaker; M'Gee and M'Adam were under citation, but never appeared. The whole business was finished by the Assembly in 1809, and in February, 1810, the present Cumberland formed themselves into a separate body. By a subsequent Assembly they have been recognised as other denominations, such as Methodists, Baptists, &c. Some of their ministers are more violent against us than the Methodists. Their preachers are generally illiterate, and a little more than semi-Arminian. They have carried off, by their zeal and name, many members of our church, where we had no ministry. A friend in whom we can confide lately informed us, that they are very friendly in Missouri; co-operate with us heartily in the Christian enterprises of the day; boldly and successfully combat heresy; and appear to manifest great anxiety and desire to become,

in some way, united with us. But this cannot be, from their present aspect as a body. Their literary character, as well as orthodox standard, is too low and uncertain. Should it become expedient to branch out, in extending the history of the revival (as we wrote of this before), it will be necessary to trace, first, the New Lights, the sphere of whose operations was in the eastern section of Kentucky, by Marshall, Stone, &c. The Rev. W. L. McCalla collected materials for their history before he left Kentucky, but I know not what he did with them. Out of these heretics soon sprung the Shakers, whose history is familiar. The Cumberland is a distinct branch altogether, gradually rising and growing out of the disorders which obtained in the Green River country, or further down in Kentucky, and in West Tennessee, called Cumberland, we suppose, from the river of that name, running by Nashville. This accounts for the name "Cumberland Presbytery," at first given to that section of our Synod, and subsequently adopted by the present Cumberlands, as they are generally called. In their worship, they are considered more noisy and disorderly than the Methodists. In short, to use a homely phrase, they have Presbyterian warp, but Methodist filling.

#### THE JERKS.

As the facts in relation to these bodily agitations are somewhat remarkable, we deem it expedient to make some addition to what is stated above, by our worthy correspondent.

The phenomenon of swooning, or suddenly falling or sinking down, under religious exercises, has not been uncommon in times of great excitement, and under very impassioned preaching. Such occurrences were very frequent under the ministry of Whitefield and Wesley; and in this country, during the great revivals which took place under the preaching of Whitefield, the Tennents, Blairs, &c., such appearances were of frequent occurrence. The same was remarkably the fact at Cambuslang and Kilsyth in Scotland, during the extraordinary religious excitement which took place in those towns, early in the last century. We have also witnessed such effects on the body, as occurring very commonly, in the meetings of the Methodists and Baptists in the south and west. In the cases which have fallen under our observation, the effect on the body was entirely involuntary. Sometimes it was preceded by a universal trembling of the whole frame; but, at other times, the falling was as sudden as if the person had been struck with lightning. In some cases, there followed a convulsive motion of the limbs; but most frequently the patient lay motionless, as if in a swoon. And the only remarkable difference between these paroxysms and those of common syncope is that, in the former, the person is not unconscious of what is said and done in his presence.

But the bodily agitation called the jerks is a very different affec-

tion ; and the only appearance known to us which bears a resemblance to it is the jumping exercise in Wales, of which Dr. Haygarth has given an account in his treatise "On the Effect of the Imagination in the cure of bodily diseases." The same facts are referred to in Sidney's *Life of Rowland Hill*. This extraordinary nervous agitation commenced, as stated by our correspondent, in East Tennessee, at a sacramental meeting ; and we have been informed, that on that day several hundreds of persons, of all ages and sexes, were seized with this involuntary motion. It was at first almost uniformly confined to the arms, and the motion proceeded downwards from the elbow, causing the arm to move with a sudden jerk or quick convulsive motion, and these jerks succeeded each other after short intervals. For some time no religious meeting was held, in which this novel involuntary exercise was not exhibited by more or less of the audience in that part of the country where they originated. And, generally, all those who had once been the subjects of it, continued to be frequently affected, and not only at meeting, but at home, and sometimes when entirely alone. After the commencement of the jerks, they spread rapidly in all directions. Persons drawn by curiosity to visit the congregations where they existed, were often seized, and when they returned home, they would communicate them to the people there. But, in some instances, they occurred in remote valleys of the mountains, where the people had no opportunity of communication with the infected. In East Tennessee and the south-western part of Virginia, their prevalence was the greatest ; and in this region, persons of all descriptions were seized, from the aged, grey-headed preacher, down to children of eight or ten years of age. Soon, however, the "exercise" began to assume a variety of appearances. While the jerks in the arms continued to be the most common form, in many cases the joint of the neck was the seat of the convulsive motion, and was thrown back and forward to an extent, and with a celerity, which no one could imitate, and which to the spectator was most alarming. Another common exercise was dancing, which was performed by a gentle and not ungraceful motion, but with little variety in the steps. During the administration of the Lord's Supper, in the presence of the Synod of Virginia, we witnessed a young woman performing this exercise for the space of twenty minutes or half an hour. The pew in which she was sitting was cleared, and she danced from one end to the other ; her eyes were shut, and her countenance calm. When the dancing terminated, she fell, and seemed to be agitated with more violent motions. We saw another who had what was termed "the jumping exercise ;" which resembled that of the jumpers in Wales. It was truly wonderful to observe the violence of the impetus with which she was borne upwards from the ground : it required the united strength of three or four of her companions to confine her down. None of these varieties, however, were half so terrible to the spectator, as that which affected the joint of the



neck. In this, it appeared as if the neck must be broken; and while the bosom heaved in an extraordinary manner, the countenance was distorted in a disgusting way.

Besides the "exercises" already mentioned, there were some of the most curious and ludicrous kind. In one, the affected barked like a dog; in another, they boxed with fists clenched, striking at every body or thing near to them. The running exercise was also one of the varieties, in which the person was impelled to run with amazing swiftness. There were many other singular motions in imitation of persons playing on the violin, or sewing with a needle, &c., &c.

The most remarkable circumstance in relation to these various exercises was, that a person affected with a peculiar species of the jerks, coming into a congregation where that had not been experienced, would commonly communicate it to those who had been affected with exercises of a different kind. Thus, a lady from Tennessee, who brought into a certain part of Virginia the barking exercise, immediately was imitated by certain of those affected with the jerks, who had never seen anything of this sort before. These nervous agitations were at first received as something supernatural, intended to arrest the attention of the careless multitude, and were therefore encouraged and sustained by many of the pious; but after a while they became troublesome. The noise made by these convulsive motions in the pews was such, that the preacher could not be composedly heard; and in several of the exercises the affected person needed the attention of more than one assistant. Besides, nervous agitation or falling was so easily brought on by the least mental excitement, even at home, that many who were the subjects of the jerks became weary of it; and, in some cases, avoided serious and exciting thoughts, lest they should produce this effect. It is remarkable, however, that they all united in their testimony, that in the most violent and convulsive agitations, as when the head would rapidly strike the breast and back alternately, no pain was experienced; and some asserted, that when one arm only was affected with the jerks, it felt more comfortable than the other, through the whole day. Perhaps this was imagination. In some places the persons affected were not permitted to come to the church, on account of the noise and disturbance produced. The subjects were generally pious, or seriously affected with religion, but not universally. There were cases in which careless persons, and those who continued to be such, were seized. The dread of the jerks was great in many, both religious and careless, and, upon the whole, the effect produced by them was very unfavourable to the advancement of religion. All, however, were not of this opinion. Some who had much experience of them, continued to speak favourably of their effects.

We have the pleasure of annexing to our account, the statement of an intelligent and respectable physician, who appears to have

paid much attention to subjects of this kind. The opinion of such men is valuable, as they are better acquainted with the physiology of man than other persons.

*The Jerks.*—"This affection I have repeatedly witnessed in the State of Illinois in the years 1822-3-4. The persons subject to it were principally females in the humbler walks of life, natives of North Carolina and Tennessee. Young females (say from thirteen to thirty years old) of sanguine and nervous temperament were more addicted to it than others. It is equally prevalent among Methodists and Cumberland Presbyterians. Their discourses are generally passionate addresses, first to the fears, and secondly to the sympathies of their hearers. At the conclusion of these addresses, hymns are sung with great animation, the leaders passing through the congregation shaking their hands. The jerks or falling generally commence at the conclusion of the sermon and increase during the singing. Different persons are variously affected: some rise to their feet and spin round like a top, while others dance till they fall down exhausted. Some throw back their heads with convulsive laughter, while others, drowned in tears, break forth in sighs and lamentations. Some fall from their seats in a state of insensibility, and lie for hours without consciousness, while others are affected with violent convulsions resembling epilepsy. Those habituated to the affection are generally attacked under the circumstances above detailed, but I have seen some persons who had become so irritable that the least mental excitement would produce the paroxysm. Others appeared to be affected from sympathy. I have seen several young women of the same neighbourhood, who were always attacked at seeing one of their number with the paroxysm. I have seen others who would be instantly attacked on seeing any person with the affection without having any previous mental excitement. During the convulsive paroxysm, recollection and sensation are but little impaired; after continuing a certain period, the person generally falls into a state of stupor very much resembling that subsequent to epilepsy. Yet the animal functions are not much impaired. The pulse is natural. The temperature that of health throughout the paroxysm: after it has subsided, there is soreness of the muscles and a slight dull pain of the head, which soon pass away.

"From the sex of those most subject to the affection, the time of life when they are most susceptible of it, the condition they occupy in society, the causes which excite it into action, and the effect produced by the paroxysm, I was led to the conclusion that it was a nervous disease brought on by continual mental excitement, and protracted by habit, that after it has once become habitual from long continued mental excitement, sympathy will be sufficient to call it into action without mental excitement.

"Many of the subjects of this affection were addicted to hys-

terics; and all, persons easily affected by anything exciting the natural sympathies.

"I have omitted to mention one fact I have often witnessed, viz: that restraint often prevents the paroxysm. For example: persons always attacked by this affection in churches where it is encouraged, will be perfectly calm in other churches where it is discouraged, however affecting may be the service, and however great the mental excitement. Some of them have told me that such was the fact, and as these were the more intelligent of those addicted to such affections, I doubt not the truth of what they said."

REFLECTIONS.—1. The first reflection which is suggested by the preceding accounts is, that the physiology of the human system is very imperfectly understood.

2. The second is, that an irregular action of the nervous system produces often very astonishing appearances.

3. Religious excitement carried to excess is a dangerous thing. Enthusiasm is the counterfeit of true religion, and is a species of insanity.

4. In revivals of religion, badly regulated, there may be much extravagance, and yet the work in the main may be genuine. The wise will discriminate, and not approve or condemn in the lump.

5. Pious men and women are imperfect in knowledge, and often form erroneous opinions which lead them astray. Bodily affections, however, are no evidence of error or enthusiasm.

6. Such bodily affections as are described in the foregoing narratives, are no doubt real nervous diseases, which do not destroy the general health.

7. All such things tend to the discredit of religion, and should be prevented or discouraged.



## ESSAY XXI.

THE

# HISTORY OF THEOLOGY, IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY:

BY PROFESSOR THOLUCK OF HALLE.\*

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HUMAN knowledge is derived from reflection and experience. The latter supplies the materials, which the former arranges and systematises. The first step, therefore, in the acquisition of knowledge, is the collection of facts. But, as our personal experience is so limited, we must avail ourselves of the experience of others, and as far as possible of that of the whole race to which we belong. And although much of this experience may not be immediately applicable to ourselves, it will, in general, be found available to our purposes, as all men are but one family. It is thus the great object of history to enlarge and perfect our personal experience by that of our fellow men. Even profane history furnishes us with an abundance of facts, illustrative of the nature of man and his relation to God, and from the history of the church we can learn with much greater clearness these interesting truths. As in the lives of individuals there are periods in which they can learn more of themselves and their relation to God, than in others; so in the history of the church there are periods peculiarly rich in instruction. Such, for example, as the commencement of the Christian era, the time of the Reformation, and the age in which we live. From the intimate connexion of events, however, it is difficult to fix with precision the limits of such periods. The development is not confined to one insulated point: although its progress and character

\* This essay is a translation made at Halle, in 1827, from a manuscript copy of a course of lectures delivered by the author, when connected with the university of Berlin. Any abruptness or want of connexion in the sentences, which may in some instances be observable, will easily be excused, if it is remembered that these lectures were not intended for the press, and that the manuscript which the translator has used, is a transcript of notes taken in the lecture room. It is probable that the lectures themselves were never written out in full.—As Dr. Tholuck has had the kindness to read the translation, however, it is presumed that nothing essential has been omitted.

are more obvious in some portions of the period than in others. When, therefore, we wish to treat of important portions of ecclesiastical history, we cannot confine our attention to these portions themselves, but must review those which preceded them and trace the causes of the events which we wish to record, and mark their effect upon following generations. With respect to the history of our own times we can only review the past, and endeavour to ascertain the causes of the events which we now behold; their consequences we must leave to others to examine.

It is the object of the present course of lectures, to examine the causes which have produced the present state of religion and theology. This examination will teach us what great lesson God would have us learn from the present state of the church. For it is clear from the review of the whole course of ecclesiastical history, that it is the object of divine wisdom to make every age inculcate some great moral or religious truth. God allows the Gospel to come into conflict with all the diversified forms of human folly and sin, to teach us that it contains the remedy for every possible form of error and evil, and to make this very conflict the means of rendering more and more perfect the manner of conceiving and presenting its doctrines. In the first ages, the Christian faith, having not yet insinuated itself into the feelings and modes of thinking of the early Christians, we see the constant struggle between the free grace of the Gospel and the disposition to depend upon legal observances. In the second period, we see the Gospel in conflict with various philosophical systems, some irreconcilably opposed to it, others attempting an amalgamation with it, but none of them effecting the purpose of rendering theology at once biblical and philosophical. In the middle ages we see the corrupted faith and imperfect philosophy of the earlier periods degenerating into superstition, equally destructive of genuine faith and true philosophy. In the time of the Reformation, religion and knowledge appear anew. The doctrines which distinguish this period were truly evangelical, and the theological systems, biblical, but not entirely free from the fetters of the old philosophy. To this succeeded the period of strenuous orthodoxy, and vital piety again declined, leaving nothing but the mere form of biblical knowledge; and even this, being destitute of the vital principle, was less perfect than it was among the reformers. The period of pietism followed—and orthodoxy was again imbued with life and restored to the form in which it was held by the reformers, but not improved. The next period was that of the theoretical and practical infidelity, and piety again declined in the Protestant church. Within the last ten years it has been again revived—and made to rest upon the leading doctrines of the Bible. Theology is pervaded by a spirit of true religion, and is so advanced, that it has nothing to fear from its opposers.

Through the experience of all past centuries, therefore, the present age may derive much important instruction, and the almost

universal declension of the period of scepticism now passing away, has led theologians more carefully to examine what doctrines can best be made the foundation of a theological system, and are most essential to vital piety; and to endeavour so to construct their systems as to render them proof against all objections. To teach this lesson appears to be the object of the age in which we live.

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## I.—CONFLICT BETWEEN ORTHODOXY AND PIETISM.

### SECTION I.—*The declension of vital piety into mere speculative orthodoxy.—Period of formal orthodoxy.*

As we have already remarked, in order to explain the present state of religion and theology, we must direct our attention to the preceding period of scepticism; for the extent to which infidelity was then carried, has produced the reaction which we now witness. But the period of scepticism cannot be properly understood without previously attending to that of pietism and orthodoxy, which in some measure led to this infidelity. Partly in that pietism undervalued the defence of religion by human learning; and partly from the defective manner in which theology, as a science, was presented to the public. The theology or formal orthodoxy of this period may be traced to the Reformers. It was indeed the object of these great men to restore the pure doctrines of the Bible, and to reduce them to a regular system; but there were many circumstances in the age in which they lived, which prevented them from fully effecting this object. We do not see many in this period, who seem to have been led to the renunciation of the Catholic faith, from the inward experience of religion. Those who had this experience, were the real authors of all that was accomplished in this eventful era. Yet there were many who renounced the Catholic errors upon nothing more than speculative conviction; others sought only the liberty of opinion and of worship; others were influenced by political motives; others were carried along by the general movement, without knowing why or whither. And here lies the principal reason, that the Protestant church at this time was far from effecting the general diffusion of true religion. The Reformers laboured indeed assiduously, and in various ways, to purge the church of the evils arising from this source; Luther by making provision for the education of children and servants; Melancthon by turning his attention to the schools and universities; Calvin by the strict church discipline which he established in Geneva—a model of ecclesiastical polity.

Their object, however, was not attained; partly on account of the unsettled state of things produced by the wars of that period, and partly on account of the numerous controversies in which the Reformers and their successors were engaged amongst each other.



In the war which arose out of the league of Schmalcald, Melancthon was obliged to flee to Brunswick, and afterwards to Magdeburg; Bucerus to England; Chytraeus to Tübingen and Heidelberg. In this unsettled state, it is evident the interests of the church must have materially suffered. But further than this, in the time of Luther, the violent contest between the Lutherans and Reformed had already commenced. Through this controversy the parties were more and more separated, and the study of theology greatly injured, by being directed almost exclusively to the subjects in debate. Besides this, many parties arose, in the bosom of the Lutheran church itself, which estranged the feelings of its members from each other, and fixed their attention upon matters of minor importance. Melancthon especially appears to have felt how seriously these controversies interfered with the advancement of religion. It is known that he was accustomed to write in the Albums of his friends, *A contentioso theologo libera nos, bone Deus!* A paper was found among his effects after his death, stating he was glad to leave the world, to be beyond the reach of the *rabies theologorum*. Under these circumstances it is clear that neither theological knowledge nor true piety could flourish; and this was at once manifested by the character of the works published at this period.

The reformers had clearly taught, that the exposition of the scriptures was the foundation of all theological knowledge. But this principle was less and less practically regarded by their followers, especially in the Lutheran church, where the whole activity of the learned was expended in polemics. Exegesis and Dogmatic were extended no further than the defence of the symbolical books, and were not scientifically studied for their own sake. Exegesis particularly sank into neglect. In the beginning of the 17th century, few if any lectures were read upon this subject in the German universities. Spener obtained a command from the elector of Saxony, that exegetical lectures should be read in Leipzig; but when Carpzov commenced reading in obedience to this order, he was obliged to desist after the very first lecture, for want of hearers. Spener says, he knew theologians who had been six years at the university, without receiving the least instruction upon this subject. The exegetical books of this period contained nothing more than the application of the formularies of the church to the explication of particular passages of the sacred scriptures. This was, indeed, not always the case, but the exceptions were few. The Dogmatic was as much confined to the path marked out by the symbolical books as the exegesis. Melancthon's *loci theologici* were thrown aside, and Hutter's *loci communes*, filled with scholastic disputations, were adopted in their place. Ecclesiastical history was a defence of Protestantism, and an account of the controversies between the Calvinists and Lutherans. This department was almost entirely neglected in the 17th century in all the universities, of which Spener loudly complained. The evils

of the prevalent system were peculiarly manifested in the practical part of ministerial duties, and operated most injuriously on the piety of the common people. Even in the sermons of Luther there is by far too much of a polemical character, which, although it admits of apology, cannot be entirely justified. But in his sermons there was always a general practical tendency, which became less and less characteristic of those of his followers. The sermons of the 17th century were generally directed against heretics, and to the inculcation of a dry system of morals, although the form of orthodoxy was strictly adhered to. The manner of preaching was equally forced, delighting in uninteresting grammatical remarks, or childish playing upon words. The pastor Jacob Andriæ published a volume of sermons in four parts, 1568. The first part was devoted to the papistical controversy, the second against the disciples of Zwingle, the third against the followers of Schwenkfeld,\* and the fourth against the Anabaptists. Artomedes in Koenigsberg published eight sermons, in 1598, on the Lord's Supper, filled with the bitterest revilings against the Calvinists. One of these sermons begins thus, "Against the Holy Supper, two bands of the devil are contending, the idolatrous Papists and the concerted Calvinists. Even the poor heathen Ovid was a better theologian than our Calvinists." As an example of the tasteless manner of sermonizing in this period, we refer to a discourse of Hermann, a preacher in Brieg, in Silesia, upon Zacheus. His text was, "He was small in person." He divided his sermon in the following manner:—1st, that little word *he* teaches us, *personae qualitatem*; 2d, the little word *was*, *vitæ fragilitatem*; 3d, *small*, *staturæ parvitatem*. To the exegetical part of the sermon, followed the practical part, which was commonly equally insipid. Thus the application made by Hermann of the text, just mentioned was: 1st, that Zacheus was *informator de varietate operum Dei*; 2, *consolator parvorum*; 3, *adhortator ut defectum nostrum virtute compensemus*. In the polemical discourses the application consisted in the direction of the subject to particular heretics.

Spener also complains greatly of the manner of studying pursued in the Gymnasia. In his *Piis Desideriis*, and in his preface to Dannhauer's *Hodogetic*, he says, that in the schools Latin alone is studied; Greek is almost neglected, and Hebrew entirely so. The students proceed to the university without any proper idea of what theology is, which they regard as a mere task for the memory. Prayer, meditation, and a holy walk and conversation are regarded as of little consequence. With respect to the several departments of the course of study, he says, "the philosophy is nothing more than dull scholastic formularies, and yet to this branch the greatest portion of time is devoted. Philology is almost unknown;

\* Schwenkfeld was a Silecian nobleman, born in 1490, who separated from the Lutheran church and founded a distinct sect, distinguished by many mystical doctrines.—(Tr.)

many theologians cannot read the Greek Testament. *Thetik*, or Dogmatic in its most restricted sense, is regarded as the most important branch of theology; the quotation of scripture passages in support of doctrines is little resorted to. Exegesis is only studied after the student has become a preacher, and even then no further than to enable him to make out the exposition of his text. Polemics are regarded as second only to thetik in importance, although it is difficult to be ever refuting errors when we ourselves know not the truth. And if the necessity of this branch be admitted, it does not follow that every preacher should be a polemic. Ethics are not taught at all. Homiletics consist merely in scholastic rules for the logical construction of a sermon.

Thomasius, a learned professor of philosophy, published, in 1686, a work entitled, "Free ideas, pleasant and serious, on all kinds of new books;" in which he gives the following description of a candidate of theology. "He has studied two years the Aristotelian philosophy, devoted a third to positive theology, the fourth to scholastic theology, and the fifth to polemic theology. He has held a long disputation on the importance of metaphysics in refuting heretics, is able to prepare a well-wrought sermon, with the help of philosophy, logical arrangement, and a concordance, and prepare a refutation of that 'devilish' book of Richard Simon, the 'Critical History of the Old Testament,' and is all the while an utter stranger to practical theology."

The better part of the theologians describe also in dark colours the state of the laity. Thomas Gerhard, a learned and pious theologian, says, "even the most constant attendants in church are very immoral in their lives; yet, if any one questions their Christian character they are ready to commence a legal prosecution against him. Whoever becomes a real Christian is stigmatized as a Pharisee,\* Weigelian, or Rosierucian." External religion, or the observance of the rites of the church, was greatly overvalued, and even the Lord's Supper was greatly abused. One of the friends of Spener, H. Mueller, complains particularly of what he calls the four dumb idols of the church; the baptismal font, the pulpit, the confessional, and the altar.

SECTION II.—*The First Controversy against Formal Orthodoxy, occasioned by the Revival of Vital Piety, through the instrumentality of JOHN ARNDT.*

IN the period of which we have been speaking, many voices were heard lamenting over the fall of the church. But these complaints were generally made so cautiously, and were attended with so little exertion to correct the evil, that they produced little effect. The first impression of importance was produced by John Arndt,

\* Val. Weigel was a preacher in Tschopau, born 1533. His writings speak much of the "inward light," and anointing, which he made the great source of religious knowledge: his views of the Trinity, and many other important doctrines, are also peculiar.—(Tr.)



who died May 6th, 1621. He was pious from his youth. During his stay at the university, he manifested peculiar fondness for exegetical studies, which was then generally the result of real religion. In Helmstadt he privately interpreted the Epistle to the Romans. As soon as he entered upon his office as a clergyman, he began to preach in a biblical manner, especially upon the doctrine of regeneration. This was an exceedingly unpleasant subject to the orthodox, who were accustomed to explain it as nothing more than baptism. Arndt possessed the same mildness and modesty which adorned the character of Spener, connected with more energy of mind. Neither his excellence nor his vigilance were, however, able to prevent the attacks of his enemies, in which character the orthodox very soon appeared. They complained that he required of men angelic perfection; they accused him of being an alchemist, and accounted for his liberality by saying that he had discovered the philosopher's stone, and could therefore well afford to dispense his ill-gotten gold. The preachers in Brunswick publicly warned their hearers against the poison he was disseminating. After the publication of his book upon true religion, the opposition became more violent. (This work has been translated into a greater number of languages than any other human production, with the exception of Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*.) The pulpits in every part of Germany resounded with denunciations against him and his doctrines. He was pronounced a dangerous heretic by John Cordinus, a preacher in Dantzic. His opposers ridiculed his sermons and writings, and were not ashamed to call this distinguished servant of God, "an ignorant ass." Lucas Osiander wrote, in 1623, a long work against him, entitled, "Theological Reflections and well-intended Christian Admonitions." The author accuses Arndt of five distinct and inconsistent heresies; making him a follower of the Pope, of Calvin, of Flacius, of Schwenkfeld and Weigel. He goes so far as to say, that he had blasphemed the Holy Ghost, in ascribing the work of the devil to God. Tiburtius Rango also wrote a book against him, entitled, "Christian Prudence, or the Method of treating Errorists and Heretics."

Arndt's work, however, awakened among all classes throughout Germany a spirit of anxious inquiry, and many were found willing to rank themselves among the friends of the author. Among these were two distinguished men, the Superintendent Scriver, who died in Magdeburg, 1601, and H. Mueller, who died in Rostock, 1676. The most important of his followers was Spener, who was principally indebted to his writings for his knowledge of vital piety.

### SECTION III.—*Spener and his Labours.*

SPENER was born in Alsace in 1635. His parents were pious, and early devoted their son to the sacred ministry. He spent much of his time in reading the Bible, Arndt's "True Religion," and

a few devotional books in English. Spener pursued his theological studies in Strasburg, where he enjoyed the instructions of two distinguished theologians, Danhauer and Sebastian Schmidt. He afterwards studied Hebrew and the Oriental languages with Buxtorf, in Basle, and was appointed preacher in Strasburg in 1663. In 1666 he received a call to become senior pastor in the city of Frankfort-on-the-Main. This call he referred to the magistrates of Strasburg, who decided that he ought to accept it. The first remarkable effect of his labours, which he witnessed, was in 1669. At this time he preached a sermon upon the righteousness of the Pharisees, and that of the true children of God, which produced a powerful impression upon the whole city. Many who had been merely formally orthodox were brought to the true love of Christ, while others declared they would never enter the church again. Spener now appointed those meetings for social worship which, on account of the attention which they excited and the controversy to which they gave rise, deserve to be particularly noticed. These meetings, which at a later period he held in his own house, were of a conversational character, in which he spoke to the persons present on the state of religion in their own hearts, questioned them in reference to the exercises of the Sabbath, and endeavoured to ascertain how far his public discourses had been understood. As these meetings were very soon attacked, Spener appealed to the symbolical books and the articles of Schmalcald. In the third part of the 4th article it is said, "Brotherly conversation among the members of the church on the word of God, is an important means of Christian edification." The theological faculties of the several universities, to whom a reference upon this subject had been made, returned answers merely requiring that nothing should be undertaken in those meetings against the evangelical church. The answer from the university of Kiel was peculiarly favourable. Benedict Carpzov, in Leipzig, afterwards Spener's greatest enemy, early declared himself in their favour. He says in his work, "Select Moral Sentences," "No one can tell how useful these meetings may be, especially when the people have an opportunity of conversing with their pastor, for it is certain that many will learn in an hour thus spent more than they would from ten sermons." After some time many of the most respectable inhabitants requested that these meetings should be held in the church. This was accordingly done; but Spener complains, that from this time the blessing which had attended them ceased: the people were not disposed to converse freely in so public and solemn a place.

The next important effort of Spener in the promotion of piety, was the publication of his *Pia Desideria*, which fell like a spark of fire upon a parched field. If ever a work was written with moderation, humility, and love, so as completely to close the mouths of opposers, it was this. That the so called orthodox became so violent against such a work, is one of the most melancholy exhibi-

tions of the character of this period. In this book Spener says, that those in authority appeared in general to know nothing of real religion, and that they seldom did more than endeavour to maintain the form of orthodoxy; that frequently truly pious persons were persecuted; that a reformation among the clergy was absolutely necessary; that, as the case then stood, a man could hardly with a safe conscience enter the ministry; that religion was a mere form; that many of the clergy were openly irregular in their lives; that he who required that Christians should walk agreeably to their professions was denounced as a Papist or Quaker; that a most inordinate degree of importance was placed upon learning; that the clergy were regarded as a priesthood and differed little in their conduct from the Catholic priesthood, and that there was no paternal connexion between them and the laity. All this Spener said, not in a tone of reproach but of lamentation, and hence it sunk deeply into many hearts. He received innumerable letters filled with expressions of gratitude for benefit derived from his work. Many theologians also at the universities, and among others, Carpzov, expressed their approval of this publication. From this time all eyes in Germany were directed towards Spener, and, as might be expected, many opponents took the field against him, who accused him of holding anti-lutheran and heretical principles. Dilefeld, Diaconus in Nordhausen, wrote a work against him in 1697, entitled, "Theosophia Horbio-Speneriana." The passage in Spener's book which gave most offence was the declaration that there could be no true knowledge of divine truth without regeneration. Dilefeld maintained the contrary, and asserted that Spener's doctrine led to mysticism. Spener defended his opinions in the book, "General Theology," in which he makes the experience of practical religion the foundation of all true theological knowledge.

Gradually the good work which he had effected in Frankfort began to decline; tares became mingled with the wheat, which gave occasion to the good to be evil spoken of. At this period Spener was visited with a sickness which confined him seven months, and led him to a more thorough knowledge of his own heart, and of divine truth. In 1686 he was called as court preacher and member of the Upper Consistory to Dresden. The decision respecting this call he submitted to the magistrates, who were very desirous of retaining him in Frankfort; but having consulted with several of the clergy whose opinions were in favour of his acceptance, they decided accordingly, and Spener proceeded to Dresden. In his first discourse he brought forward what was then the most important subject, the difference between a dead and living faith. Within three weeks after his arrival many were aroused from their former security. Even the Elector, who was openly immoral, although strenuous in his orthodoxy, was much affected by his preaching. Spener was entirely free from the pride which distinguished the clergy of this period, and which led them either to a



vain display of their learning, or an exclusive association with the higher ranks of society. They were ashamed to condescend to the humble duties of catechetical instruction. Spener immediately undertook this labour, and saw it crowned with the most obvious blessing. Many of the clergy ridiculed him on this account, and said that the Elector had got a schoolmaster instead of a court preacher. Through his influence, however, this mode of instruction was introduced throughout Saxony. He also induced the Elector to order that exegetical lectures should be read in the universities. In these and various other ways the changes which he effected were very considerable. In Dresden he had many friends warmly attached to him; but the Elector became gradually discontented with his earnest preaching, and threatened not to attend his church; a threat he finally executed. Spener at this time took a step for which he would have been entirely inadequate, if it were not for the assistance of the Spirit of God. He was by nature exceedingly timid and bashful, but the grace of God made him bold; and it is the tendency of all minds, whatever may be their natural temperament, to come up to the same standard when influenced by this grace. He undertook to address a serious remonstrance to the Elector upon his mode of life. The Elector was at this period entirely estranged from him, and never attended his preaching. In 1691 Spener was called to Berlin, as member of the Upper-Consistory and provost of the church of St. Nicholas. As the Elector was desirous to be freed from him, Spener accepted the call. The opposition to him in Saxony, supported by the Prince, was becoming every day more violent. Carpzov wrote two treatises against him, and excited all the clergy to withstand his efforts. The enmity of Carpzov arose partly from envy of the station which Spener occupied, and partly from his disapprobation of the changes which he had introduced. The labours also of Spener were producing an effect in Leipzig with which Carpzov was by no means pleased. Franke, Anton, and Schade, who were private teachers attached to the university, began to hold meetings for the practical exposition of the Bible, which Carpzov did not approve.

Spener's influence in Berlin was still greater than that which he had attained in Saxony. The Elector of Brandenburg, although a rough man, was very favourable to the promotion of religion, and was himself easily impressed by the truth. Spener's most important service was giving a proper direction to the infant university of Halle. Until this period, the Prussian youth frequented principally the university of Wittenberg, where they were filled with a bitter spirit of opposition to the reformed. The Elector, who was exceedingly opposed to controversy about unessential points, was very desirous that the two communions should live in peace. To promote this object, he wished to found a university within his own territories, and furnish it with professors of a better spirit. Halle was at this time a military academy for noblemen, where

Thomasius, distinguished by his bold and independent spirit of investigation, executed the office of a teacher. Here the Elector determined to found his university. In the selection of the professors, he submitted principally to the direction of Spener, prescribing only that they should not be polemics. The providence of God so directed the efforts of Spener, that he succeeded in obtaining pious men to fill these important offices. Breithaupt, senior pastor in Frankfort, and Francke, professor of the oriental languages, and pastor of the Glaucha church in Halle, were particularly distinguished for their religious zeal. In 1694, the university was fully organized.

Spener wrote many devotional books, excited those in authority to improve the school and church system, received students into his own house, gave regular biblical instructions, and exerted his influence to have proper persons appointed to office. The only trial connected with his situation in Berlin, was the desire of a part of his congregation to separate from his charge. This arose principally from the influence of Dr. Schade, the second preacher in the same church. He was greatly distressed at seeing the numbers who came to the communion, without appearing to be really Christians. His anxiety upon this subject was such, that, days before the administration of the ordinance, his peace was entirely destroyed, and he would spend the night in weeping and prayer. Spener in vain endeavoured to compose his mind, and remove his difficulties. He very unexpectedly published a most intemperate book upon the subject, in which he called the confessional "the seat of Satan," and "the pit of hell." Many theologians espoused his cause; he was however displaced, and Spener was obliged to join in the effort to effect his removal. Spener died in 1705, February 5th. The evening before his death he caused the prayer of our Saviour, in the twenty-fifth chapter of John, to be read to him. He had never preached upon this passage of scripture, as he said he could not understand it, and that its contents could not be comprehended in this world. But now, said he, I am going where all will be explained.

Spener was not distinguished for his natural endowments. He had acquired considerable information, particularly of a historical kind, as is evinced by his work on Heraldry; but still he was not præ eminent for learning. He was, however, possessed of a clear judgment, by which he discriminated in every department what was of most value, and took an impartial view of every subject. He had none of that force of character which distinguished other reformers. Not impelled by the ardour of his own feelings, he could, perhaps, the more purely act under the influence of an impulse which came from a purer source: and that he was thus influenced from above, is evident from his great and effectual exertions, notwithstanding the natural softness of his character. This mildness was, in his situation, of peculiar importance, as the orthodox, from their superior numbers and power, would have been able

effectually to suppress a more virulent opponent. But as it was, all who were not entirely devoted to the opposite party, and especially the Elector, were disposed to espouse his cause. Spener never permitted himself to think that he was acting the part of a reformer. He says, in his "Answers to Cases of Conscience," "I never dreamt of the folly of undertaking a reformation. I am too sensible of my own weakness, and that I have neither the wisdom nor power requisite for such a work. I content myself with exciting those to effect the reformation whom God has called to the work." And in another place he says, "I find a great deficiency in learning, and other qualifications in myself, of which I have abundant reason to be conscious, in the discharge of the ordinary duties of my office; so that I am often ashamed of my inability to give even advice. What should I then do, if I should undertake so great a work? Especially am I deficient in faith, which, alas! is so weak, as to be hardly sufficient, even in matters of small moment, to overcome my natural timidity, much less to make me equal to enterprises which would require the spirit of a hero; when the Lord will restore his church to its proper state, he will choose far different men than such as I am."

The enemies of Spener opposed him with unexampled virulence. The most important work written against him was, "The Unanimous Judgment of the University of Wittenberg," 1698; or, with the fuller title, "Christian-Lutheran Doctrines according to the Word of God, and the Symbolical Books in opposition to Dr. Spener; by the Theologians of Wittenberg." In this book, two hundred and sixty-four heretical expressions are ascribed to Spener; such for example, "that believers are free from all human authority; that in a future world we shall be able perfectly to understand the nature of God; that withdrawing from the world promotes peace of mind; that a holy life is necessary to entitle a man to be called a Christian; that we can learn much from the Papists and Quakers; that all baptized persons are not regenerated." The great ground of objection was, that Christians were partakers of salvation even in this world. After his death, the expression of disapprobation became still more general, and it was a matter of dispute in the universities, whether it was proper to say, *Beatus Spener*. Professor Fecht, of Rostock, published a book, "*De Beatitude Mortuorum in Domino*," of which he devotes the 34th section to the inquiry, whether this blessedness can be predicated of Spener, and decides *Quod Non*.

The influence and example of Spener called forth the exertions of many others. Prayer-meetings were established in various places. Spener had particularly opposed the ambition of the Lutheran clergy, and defended the rights of the laity, and exhorted them to apply to the holy scriptures for instruction. This gave rise to the formation of many private religious meetings, which must be taken into view, in order to form a proper idea of the history of this period. Such meetings were instituted in Augsburg,



Essen and Darmstadt, after Spener had introduced them in Frankfurt; when he removed to Saxony, they were introduced there also, although with much opposition. In 1686, certain private teachers in Leipzig, as before-mentioned, formed a society for reading the scriptures, and for promoting the study of the original languages of the Bible. In this society, the most distinguished members were August. H. Francke, John C. Schade, Paul Anton, Gottfried Arnold. In 1686, Francke visited Dresden, and continued there some time with Spener, from whom he received a strong desire to engage in the work of promoting true religion among the people. On his return to Leipzig, he established a biblical lecture for the students. Schade and others followed his example. These meetings were continued several months, without exciting any attention. But Francke was at last accused of having said that men might be perfect in this world; that philosophy was of little use, and that it was unnecessary to contend against heretics. The students shared in these reproaches, and it was said that they so far undervalued the instructions of their professors, that they burnt the notes they had taken from their lectures. Yet, among the learned men of the university, there were some who endeavoured to counteract this opposition, and who maintained that the term Pietism, which had been given in derision, would, in its best sense, be applied to Francke and his associates; of this number was Feller, the professor of eloquence; his poem, entitled, "The Pietist," which gives a correct exhibition of the spirit of this period, is well known. The name Pietist, from this time, became general in its application to the friends of true religion. In opposition to this name, the adversaries of Spener assumed that of Orthodox. The attention of the court in Dresden was soon attracted to the controversy, and issued in 1689, an order to institute an investigation into what was called "the New Sect." Francke and Schade were called to undergo an examination, and many witnesses were summoned against them. Nothing, however, was testified to their disadvantage. The university, therefore, informed the court that nothing improper had there occurred. Thomasius was particularly active in the defence of Francke. Nevertheless, Francke was forbidden to continue his lectures, and, in 1690, was called away from Leipzig upon private business. Schade was still permitted to pursue his course of biblical instructions, which were attended by about a hundred hearers. Some of the citizens wished to attend these lectures, but as they were intended only for the students, and as disorder might arise from their attendance, Schade discouraged it. The citizens, therefore, formed a society for themselves, in which it must be acknowledged that much that was irregular occurred, and gave rise to a new alarm. In 1690, therefore, all such meetings were forbidden. The university of Wittenberg united with that of Leipzig, in sending a petition to the elector for the entire suppression of pietism. In consequence of this petition, rules and regulations were adopted worthy of a popish hierarchy.

All was now suppressed ; the pietistical students were obliged to relinquish their *stipendia*, and were given to understand, that those who attended any meetings for devotional purposes, should receive no appointment to any office. The testimonials for good conduct, due to them from the universities, were also withheld. But in order not to be unjust to the opposite party, we ought to inquire whether much which was really fanatical had not occurred in the meetings complained of. This is in itself not improbable ; but if anything of this kind had really taken place, we should expect that some distinct statement of the fact would appear in the official records of the investigations which were instituted by the public authorities. But these records contain no allegations against the pietists of this nature ; they contain no charges which are not either evidently founded upon perversions, or for preaching what we believe to be purely evangelical. A student by the name of Lange is particularly mentioned, to whom the pulpit was for some time forbidden. In hopes of his reformation he was again permitted to preach, and selected for his text Romans viii. 3. In his sermon, he said " that a penitent heart will perceive a light in itself, by which it will be led to acknowledge Jesus as its greatest good in heaven and earth, and burn and beat with love." For such fanatical expressions as these, the pulpit was again forbidden. It was particularly objected to the pietistical students, that they presented themselves as models of Christian character, which was regarded as a great breach of modesty. Christianity was then considered as something merely speculative, not to be applied to the character and conduct of every individual. This controversy gave rise to many publications. In 1691, Benedict Carpzov published a treatise, in which he styled the defence of Francke, " a sinful book." In another treatise, published in 1695, he went so far as to call Spener " *procellam ecclesiae*," " *turbinem religionis*," " *tempestatem pacis*," and even " a disciple of Spinoza."

Beyond the limits of Saxony, we also find that strenuous opposition was made to the religious movement of the day. In Erfurdt, the elector of Mayence forbade, under a penalty of a fine of a hundred dollars, every meeting for prayer and reading the Bible. The professor Manjus, in Giessen, had been accustomed to hold such meetings with some of the students, for which he was so seriously attacked by his colleagues that he was obliged to claim the protection of the magistrates. In Jena, professor Sagittarius undertook the defence of Francke, and said that pietism was nothing more than vital Christianity ; on which account the elector, John George III., wrote to the duke of Weimar that he had a disorderly professor of theology, whom he ought to visit with merited punishment. In Wolfenbuttel several preachers had united to read the Bible ; the duke sent them word that if they did not discontinue their meeting they should be deposed. But in Hamburg, more than in any other place, was the violence of this opposition to true religion manifested. (We mention particular cases, in order to give

a more impressive exhibition of the spirit of this period.) The author of the opposition in Hamburg was the learned John F. Meyer, who had been, at an earlier period, a professor of theology in Wittenberg, whence he removed to Hamburg, and from thence to Griefswalder, where he died. He, as many other of the orthodox, praised Spener, as long as they themselves were left undisturbed. But when Spener, in virtue of his office, as counsellor in the Upper-Consistory at Dresden, admonished him on account of the inconsistency of his life with his orthodox principles, the hatred of this wrathful and arrogant man became unspeakably violent against him. It was natural, therefore, that he should oppose himself to the efforts made by Spener and his friends. In Hamburg there were two or three ministers more or less favourable to pietism—Horbius, brother-in-law to Spener, Winkelman, the learned editor of the Koran, and Winkler. When Meyer perceived that they were inclined to Spener's principles his enmity arose against them, which he endeavoured to vent in the following manner. He drew up an agreement or declaration, to be signed by the preachers in Hamburg, containing a condemnation of all lax theology; a profession of adherence to the standards of the church; a rejection of the doctrine of the millennium in all its forms, and a condemnation of the works of Jacob Boehme. (Spener did not utterly proscribe the writings of Boehme, and with regard to the millennium, he only wished to exclude the grosser and more worldly ideas often connected with the doctrine.) Horbius would not subscribe this declaration, for, although he said he considered the doctrine of the millennium an error, he was not prepared to condemn all who adopted it. The dispute arising from this source widened the breach between the parties. An innocent circumstance contributed to increase the difficulty. Poiret, a mystic of the Netherlands, had written a little work upon the education of children, called "The Wisdom of the Just." This book, with the exception of a few mystical expressions, is throughout evangelical. Horbius presented it as a new year's gift to the parents in his congregation. Meyer immediately published the following little work against him: "A Hastily Composed Warning for the City of Hamburg, founded upon the Word of God." He represented the book distributed by Horbius, as containing seven distinct heresies—Socinianism, Arminianism, Quakerism, Schwenkfeldianism, Weigelianism, Popery, and Petersenism. He complained, that not content with recommending the Lord's Prayer as useful for children, the author had attached the following remarks to the recommendation. First, that God must be praised in the heart; second, that the heart must testify its sincerity by obedience; third, that the grace of God must nourish the soul; fourth, must free us from past sins; fifth, and preserve us from sinning in future. The blinded zealot then exclaims, that it was degrading the word of God, and a calumny against it, to attach such conditions to its use. His pharisaical pride and want of charity induced him to endeavour to have



Horbius immediately displaced. The magistrates, wishing to assist the latter out of the difficulty, advised him to give them an explanation. He accordingly declared his entire satisfaction with the doctrines of the symbolical books, and promised he would not recommend the work of Poiret any further, but would advise those to whom he had given it, to discontinue using it. This was far from satisfying Meyer. He informed the magistrates that he felt in conscience bound to preach against Horbius, as an arch-deceiver and fanatic. He called the three clergymen mentioned above, "lying prophets, and priests of Baal." The people took part with the orthodox, who made the way to heaven as easy as the catholics. They surrounded Horbius, when coming out of church, shouting Quaker, fanatic, enthusiast, and endeavoured to overturn his carriage, and assailed him with abusive language. Meyer preached against him, and endeavoured to present him in a ridiculous light to the people. The innocent Horbius was at length obliged, as a criminal, to fly by night from the orthodox Lutheran city of Hamburg. It is worthy of remark, that the Reformed never went to such extremes; they retained more piety and more learning than the Lutherans.

#### SECTION IV.—*The Struggle of Piety against the Orthodox, proceeding from the University of Halle.*

WE have already described the low state of learning at this time in the universities. The state of religion was not more favourable. It was rare to meet with any who connected prayer with their studies, or who read the Bible with any proper feeling of their need of its precious doctrines. Heinrich Mueller, of Rostock, in a letter written in 1695, says, "We wish to heal Babel; oh that she was willing to be healed! The physician must proceed from the universities, but, alas! how many universities are Babels themselves, and are not willing to be healed. When I think of the dreadful state of these institutions, my heart sinks within me." In Giessen, John G. Arnold was professor of Ecclesiastical History. He earnestly desired to promote the revival of true religion. But the rough, unbridled and worldly-minded temper of the students affected him so much, that he said he could no longer bear to look on hundreds of the future shepherds of souls, who had never felt the least concern for their own. He therefore resigned his office, a step which cannot be justified, since what is impossible with man is possible with God; and a favourable change very soon actually took place.

When this melancholy state both of religion and learning was thus widely extended, God erected, through the agency of Spener, an altar in Halle for true theological knowledge, not mere empty trifling speculations on the form of doctrines. Three men were called to this university from whom this new spirit proceeded; Francke, Breithaupt, and Anton.

*A Brief View of the History of A. H. Francke.*

He was born in 1663, in Lubeck ; as early as his tenth year he had serious religious impressions. When a child he used to pray that God would place him in that situation in which he could be most entirely devoted to his service. In 1679 he went to the university of Keil, where he enjoyed the society of professor Korthold. In 1682 he went to Hamburg, in order to study Hebrew with the famous proselyte Edzardi. In 1684 he proceeded to the university of Leipzig, and united himself with those private teachers of theology who felt as he did on the subject of religion. But at this time he knew nothing of the essence of real Christianity. He has left us a history of his religious experience, which is published in the work edited by Knapp and Niemeyer, "*Institutions of Francke*," vol. ii., p. 420. He gives the following narrative of his feelings. He says his attention was first particularly arrested by reflecting upon the nature of theology. It occurred to him that there should be a coincidence between the feelings and objects of the theologians of the present time and those of the apostles. But when he compared his feelings and objects with those of the first servants of Christ, he discovered that they were entirely different, that he was actuated only by a desire of worldly honour and learning. He determined, therefore, to follow more faithfully the example of the apostles. During this period he appeared to himself as a child endeavouring to contend with a giant. Having torn himself from all the pleasures of the world, he went to Luneburg. Here, after a few weeks, he was invited to preach upon John xx. 31 : "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." By meditating on the passage, he found that although he did not doubt the truths of the Gospel, he did not believe them with his whole heart. This produced a struggle which became constantly more and more distressing, until at length he was brought to question not only the divinity of Christ, but the very existence of God. His peace was effectually destroyed, and he determined not to preach in the state of mind in which he then was. In the greatest agony he uttered the prayer, "If there be a God and Saviour let him manifest his existence, that I may be delivered from this misery which I cannot longer sustain." After this prayer he experienced such a peace of mind, and so much joy, that all his doubts vanished, and he preached with a conviction of the truth to which he had before been a stranger. After obtaining this living faith in Christ, he visited Dresden, and after remaining there two months with Spener, he went to Leipzig and commenced his lectures upon the Bible. When the difficulties arose there he removed to Erfurdt, and became the pastor of one of the congregations of that city. He proceeded upon the principles of Spener, and instituted religious meetings among his people. This occasioned a persecution from his colleagues and the magistrates, and he was or-

dered to leave the town within two days. It was a remarkable interposition of Providence, that upon the very day upon which he received this command, and knew not where to go, he received the invitation of Spener to join him in Berlin. He went, and took up his abode in Spener's house, and in a few days was appointed to his station in Halle.

Paul Anton, the second theologian mentioned above, was one of those who had visited Spener in Frankfort, and there received his first serious impressions. In Leipzig, whither he afterwards went, he took part in the biblical lectures. From Leipzig he was called to Eisenach, as court preacher, and afterwards to Halle, as professor and consistorial counsellor. Breithaupt also first received his impressions from Spener in Frankfort. In Erfurdt he was a colleague of Francke; and formed an intimate friendship with him. These three men formed the theological faculty in Halle until 1709. In this year two others were added to their number, of the same sentiments, although perhaps less zealous and less distinguished for talents. These were John H. Michaelis and Joachim Lange. The course pursued by this faculty, both in reference to the mode of teaching and their manner of acting towards the students, was different from that adopted by any other. In both these respects they followed the views of Spener, notwithstanding the outcry of the theologians of Saxony. We shall attend to their plans in reference to learning, and then to the practical part of their labours. The divine blessing, notwithstanding all opposition, manifestly attended their efforts. The desire of such a mode of instruction as they adopted, was so generally felt, that notwithstanding the great fame of the university of Wittenberg, the number of students received at Halle from 1694 to 1724 amounted to 6,032.

The chief object of Francke's attention was exegesis and hermeneutics. In almost all his lectures he referred to these subjects. As early as the year 1693 he published his "*Manuductio ad lectionem Scripturae Sacrae*;" a work which has been often reprinted. In 1695 he commenced his "*Observationes Biblicae*," which were continued for a series of years. In this work he displayed the greatest boldness in exhibiting and correcting the errors of the Lutheran interpretations. It was furiously attacked by Dr. Meyer, in a book entitled, "*On the work of A. H. Francke, that attempt of the Devil still further to injure the everywhere persecuted church*." Francke, however, was not deterred from continuing his work. His principles of interpretation were adopted and cultivated by others, especially by his pupil, J. J. Rambach, in his "*Institutiones Sacrae Hermeneuticae*." Francke also raised the miserably degraded and neglected study of the oriental languages. He founded the *Collegium Orientale*, in which the more advanced students had an opportunity of exercising themselves in these languages.

Breithaupt was engaged in the Dogmatic. He published two systems, one larger and the other smaller, upon an entirely different plan from the scholastic method of Hutter's text book. These



works, and Freylinghausen's "Foundation of Theology," had great influence in promoting the study of the Bible.

Ethical study was entirely neglected by the orthodox. The school of Calixt pursued this subject in a very unprofitable manner, considering it as distinct from Dogmatic, with which it is as intimately connected as the effect with the cause, or the blossoms with the tree. The theologians of Halle proceeded upon the principle that all Christian virtues are the result of living faith in God, and thus took the proper ground for viewing the whole subject. They were particularly led to the investigation of the *ἀδιαφορα* or things indifferent. The orthodox had permitted Ethics to sink to the mere heathenish form of rules of duty. They confined their attention to gross and open sins, paying little regard to those which consist in a state of mind not conformed to the Gospel standard. They were thus led to maintain that many things in the Christian life were perfectly indifferent, and did not come within the view of a teacher of morals. In this class they included all the common occupations of life, eating, drinking, playing, dancing. The school of Spener, on the other hand, taught that nothing was indifferent; that the most common things may assume a moral character, their being good or evil depending on the state of mind in which they are performed.

Paul Anton read upon Polemics, which was then considered too important a subject to admit of its being excluded from a regular course. He, however, in a beautiful and useful manner, endeavoured to show how even heresy arose from the corrupt fountain of the heart. He said we must regard those who have departed from the faith as diseased, and ourselves as labouring under a different form of the same great malady. When we endeavour to correct the errors of men as diseases, we shall do it after the true Christian manner.

Ecclesiastical history was at this period neglected, although Spener and Francke had very correct views of its importance. The efforts of this school in regard to Homiletics are peculiarly worthy of attention. The perverted method of preaching of the 17th century had become more fixed and reduced to rule in the beginning of the eighteenth. The text was first grammatically, historically and polemically explained, and then in a five-fold manner practically applied. This five-fold application, however, among the orthodox, was generally nothing more than so many attacks upon the followers of Spener. The preacher indulged in the most silly metaphors and triflings, and dissipated the whole power of the discourse in a multitude of subtle divisions. Carpzov, in his Homiletics, gives a hundred different methods of arranging the body of a sermon. Some of these methods have particular names, as the Koenigsberg method, the Leipzig method, &c. The preachers became emulous to present the greatest possible variety in the manner of discussing the same text. The most skilful made out to give sixty distinct methods. Spener endeavoured to oppose this

kind of trifling, but his own manner of preaching was dry. The efforts of Francke and Freylinghausen were more successful. They recalled the principles of Luther, particularly such as that contained in the following passage: "When I preach in Wittenberg I descend from my elevation. I do not regard the doctors and teachers who may happen to be present, who cannot amount to more than forty, but the young people, the children and servants; it is to them I address myself, and regulate my discourse according to their wants. If the others do not like it, the door is always open." Francke referred to these and similar expressions in his Paraenetic lectures, and expresses himself in the following excellent manner: "We should not be orators, but fathers. Preachers should be like those trees, which, although fully grown, spread out their branches and let them droop upon the ground, that those who cannot ascend them, may yet reach their fruit. It is a peculiarly injurious principle, that we must accommodate ourselves to our learned hearers. When our Saviour had the Pharisees before him, he had also learned auditors, but he addressed them in the simplest manner possible."

We must also notice the lectures to which we have just referred. These Paraenetic lectures were devoted to the discussion of the difficulties and aids for the study of theology; Francke commenced them in 1693. At first he had very few hearers, but the number rapidly increased, and at last, upon the hour in which he read all the other professors omitted their lectures. In the preface to the second part of these lectures, he says, that he had never seen so visible a blessing attending any of his university labours, as these discourses; because in them he could be more pointed and personal. He had no fixed plan, but selected whatever subject appeared best adapted to the state of students. He sometimes discussed the character of particular books, or single passages of them; at others, the subjects were more practical, as the difference between a mere knowledge of the doctrines of salvation and a living faith in them, the fear of men, the nature of conversion, &c., &c. He published two volumes of these lectures in 1726-7, and his son published the remainder in five parts in 1736. Francke held also devotional meetings on the Sabbath afternoon, in which he delivered discourses upon the duties of ministers as servants of the church. He preached in rotation with the other professors in the university church, and regularly for one of the congregations in the town. He held prayer meetings in the orphan-house on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the great object of which, he said, was to guard the students against permitting their studies to turn their hearts from the "one thing needful." Besides these various efforts to promote religion, the professors had weekly meetings which the students were at liberty to attend, and consult their teachers as fathers upon any subject on which they wished advice, such as the means of their support, difficulties in their studies, the state of their hearts, &c. The professors also united for prayer and mu-

tual counsel, that they might so regulate their conduct as to become models for their students.

Various institutions were founded in order to increase the salutary influence exerted by the university. Such was the orphan-house, with its various schools, which Francke designed as a nursery of true piety, and a means of supporting the students, by affording them an opportunity of acting as teachers. The number of scholars increased so much in this establishment, that two thousand received instruction, six hundred were supported, and a hundred and thirty students of the university employed in teaching. Connected with the orphan-house was an extensive book-store, designed principally to circulate pious books at the lowest possible prices. The profits were all devoted to the institution. Besides this was the Bible institution, founded by the Baron of Canstein for the same purpose. This institution has printed and circulated 1,700,000 copies of the scriptures, and 900,000 copies of the New Testament. Books were also printed in the Ethnisch, Lettish, Russian, and Malabar languages. A missionary institution was also founded with a particular reference to the Malabar coast, and at a later period a missionary society for the Jews. Through the information circulated by these institutions, and the residence of missionaries in Halle, the desire of promoting the spread of the Gospel was greatly increased among the students. Francke lived to see the fruit of his labours. He says, in reference to this subject, that he had enjoyed the happiness to see, in a threefold respect, the effect of his efforts. First, in the real conversion of many of the students, who gave up the riches and honours of the world, and who were little disturbed even by its contempt. Second, that the students in their intercourse with each other, manifested a holy Christian love in submitting to each other, and living for their mutual advantage. Third, that in their walk and conversation they were an example to the inhabitants of the town, many of whom by their means were brought to the knowledge of true religion. And besides this, that after leaving the university, many of them had the happiness of producing revivals in their congregations; that those who had been fellow students united themselves when in office to work conjointly in doing good; and that, by their means, many formal preachers were aroused from their slumbers. Francke, however, complained towards the close of his life, that the good work appeared to be declining. In one of his lectures in 1709, he remarks, how different the students then were from what they had been some years previous. "By this time" (about the middle of August this lecture was delivered), he says, "the seed sown in the spring began to make the fields green. For after the students who entered the university at Easter, had been here a quarter of a year, their hearts began to be affected, and they would come to us to declare the effect the truth had produced upon their hearts." After the death of Francke, his influence was long continued, partly by the institutions which he had founded, and partly



by the men who had more or less imbibed his spirit; among these were Benedict Michaelis, Gottlieb Francke, the younger Freylinghausen, the elder Knapp, Callenberg, and Siegmund Baumgarten. It may also be said that Francke's influence was perpetuated by the Moravians, as it was from him and Spener that Zinzendorf derived the idea of founding this society.

SECTION V.—*The Fanaticism which connected itself with this Revival.*

IN great revivals of religion, it is almost always the case that perversions and abuses occur. The truth is always attended by error. Two kinds of errors are in such seasons peculiarly common, Fanaticism and Hypocrisy. Fanaticism proceeds from a pure excitement which gradually comes under the dominion of the imagination. The most beneficial truths are then caricatured, and if the heart be not sanctified, it avails itself of the truths thus deformed, to cover and justify its evils. It also often happens, that unconverted men, coming in contact with the truth, are deeply affected by it, but not being willing to give up their former opinions and modes of thinking, endeavour to unite them with the Gospel, and are thus led into various fanatic errors.

In the time of Spener the excitement was almost universal; the greater perhaps, on account of the preceding coldness. When Spener said the laity were the "Christian Priesthood," and should be allowed greater influence in the church, a real and genuine anxiety about divine things was excited, which, in some instances, was perverted. This perversion was partly intellectual and partly practical. The first indication of a fanatical spirit was the appearance, in various places, of persons pretending to be inspired and to be illuminated with a better and more perfect knowledge of divine truth than that contained in the Bible. The first examples of this kind occurred in Halberstadt and Quedlinburg. Circumstances similar to those which have more recently been ascribed to animal magnetism, are said to have attended the exercises of these people. Many young clergymen and others visited the persons thus affected, as though these were the most decisive and conspicuous examples of the influence of the Holy Spirit. Spener manifested upon this occasion his usual moderation. He advised that no notice should be taken of these people, and that no attempt should be made to put them down by authority. He said he would not undertake to say that it was the work of the Spirit, nor was he prepared to pronounce it the work of the flesh. The most injurious consequence was, that many distinguished men, by their writings, turned the public attention in this direction, instead of leading the people to attend to their own hearts. Such, for example, was Dr. Petersen, a man of distinguished talents, who had studied theology, and became professor of Eloquence in Rostock. He not only read the works of Spener, but those of Ichtel, Jacob

Boehme and Breckling, which gave him a tendency to fanaticism. Spener had adopted in its purer form the doctrine of the Millennium, and comforted himself with contemplating the period when the kingdom of God would be purified from every evil. Petersen seized upon this idea, and carried it to an extravagant length, teaching the doctrine of the ἀποκατάστασις, or final restoration of all things. His wife also, who shared in his fanatical principles, gave herself out for a prophetess, and published several books. Others of these pretended inspired persons spoke of the kingdom of a thousand years, which Petersen appealed to, as a proof that the doctrine must be true. He had many other peculiar opinions, as, for example, that the Son of God before his incarnation assumed a body of light—a nature between God and man. He was at last deprived of his office, and removed to the neighbourhood of Magdeburg, and died 1727.

Another distinguished man of this class was Gottfried Arnold, the ecclesiastical historian. He was mentioned above as taking part in the Biblical lectures in Leipzig. He had been led by Spener into the right way. He amassed a great store of learning, as is evinced by his works. He was appointed professor in Giesen, and, as already related, resigned his office on account of the character of the students. In 1707, he became a preacher in Berleberg, and died in 1714. His influence, through his writings, was remarkably great. He wrote, among others, the following works: "The first Love, or Description of the early Christians," a book still of much value; "Martyrology, or History of the first Martyrs." "The History of the Church and of Heresy," 2 vols. 4to. A learned work, but too much a defence of these heresies. "Homilies of St. Macarius," "The Secrets of Divine Wisdom," "The Lives of the Patriarchs," "History and Description of Mystical Theology." He always insisted upon the conversion of the heart, as the principal point in religion, but lost sight of the doctrine of Redemption, and embraced more and more an ascetic system, recommending celibacy and retiring from the world.

John Conrad Dippel. This extraordinary man studied theology, and was at first strenuously orthodox. He early turned his attention to mystical subjects, as Alchymy and Chiromancy. Through the writings of Spener he became acquainted with true religion, but embraced the doctrines without feeling their power. He at last became an unbeliever and devoted to superstition, giving himself up to alchemy, exorcism, and the art of finding hidden treasures. He not only denied the Trinity, but the personality of God, and was greatly instrumental in scattering the seeds of infidelity and scepticism. He appears gradually to have embraced an obscure system of Pantheism. The principal objects of his hostility were the doctrines of the Trinity and Justification, with regard to both of which, however, he retained the usual expressions, employing them in an entirely different sense from that commonly attached to them.

Ernest Christian Hochmann, another of the fanatics of this period, seems to have had much more serious feeling than the one last mentioned. In 1699 he published a circular letter to the Jews, exhorting them to repentance. He travelled about with a great deal of pomp, professing to exercise magical arts. He was put into prison, and when liberated resided principally in the district of Hanover. In a confession of faith, which he published, he explained the Trinity as three different names of the Deity; declared Baptism and the Lord's Supper unnecessary symbols, and that men must be perfect. The principal seat of fanaticism, at this time, was in Berleberg and Schwarzenau, in the territory of Count Casimir of Wittgenstein, who invited the fanatics to fix their residences in these places. Dippel was in connexion with this society in the latter part of his life, and thence spread abroad his doctrines. Another was John H. Haug, of Strasburg. He was particularly remarkable for his knowledge of the oriental languages. Dr. Carl, a man of considerable learning, also belongs to this class; and, lastly, Frederick Rock, a shoemaker, who was by no means an ordinary man. He was the chief of the inspired who formed themselves into a distinct sect. The works of these fanatics which produced the greatest effect were the two following: the first, the Berleberg Bible, a translation of the scriptures and remarks, by Haug, in seven folio volumes. This work manifests no little talent and learning, but the interpretations are generally made upon very false principles, and the remarks are filled with the doctrines of the Mystics. The second work was the *Spiritual Fama*, a periodical work, principally under the direction of Dr. Carl. Its object was to communicate all the new occurrences in the kingdom of God, which it presented in a form best adapted to affect the imagination, making everything a wonder.

This fanaticism was most extravagant in two sects, one of which derived its name from a woman called Ursula Maria Butler, and her daughter. This sect was distinguished by many mystical doctrines, as the necessity of separating the soul from the influence of everything external, withdrawing from the world, the indifference of outward actions if the heart was turned to God, &c. The latter principle, as might be expected, led to the greatest licentiousness, and the sect sunk into the worse form of Carpocratian doctrine. Their chief seat was in Paderborn in Westphalia. Their founder was publicly executed in 1705. The other sect was that of Ronsdorf in the duchy of Berge. Its founder was Elias Eller, a riband-weaver. This man began his course by devoting himself to the study of the Apocalypse. His wife seconded all his views. They published an explication of some of the predictions of this book, making themselves the principal personages alluded to in the prophecy. They said that the new kingdom of God was at hand, that the New Jerusalem was to be founded at Ronsdorf, and that they were appointed to be the leaders. These pretensions they endeavoured to support by various artifices, and



succeeded in bringing many persons under their influence. Eller appealed particularly to the prosperous state of the congregation in their external affairs. The town, enjoying the favour of the Prussian government, rapidly increased in business and population. Eller was proclaimed burgomaster, and made the representative of the Reformed in the province of Cleve and Berge. By this means he obtained an influence with the government, which enabled him to come out with boldness, and add fraud to his fanaticism. He now declared himself the vicar of Jesus Christ, to his congregation; when he went out he caused the cry to be made before him, "Hosanna to him who comes in the name of the Lord." He had two velvet thrones, for himself and wife, erected in the church over the seat of the magistrates. He commanded the people to pray to God, in his name, if they wished their prayers to be heard. His children, he said, were to rule in the kingdom of God, and he required them to be worshipped. In secret he gave himself up to intemperance and vice. There were two clergymen belonging to the village at this time; the one whose name was Wulfing was of a hypocritical disposition, and co-operated fully with Eller in all his views. All that he publicly preached he told the people privately was meant to apply to Eller. The other preacher was Schleiermacher. He was at first blinded by this deceiver, and dared not oppose him. But his eyes were gradually opened, and upon a certain Sabbath he preached a sermon upon the words, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." This sermon set everything into commotion. Eller, however, had art enough to make it believed that the preacher was bewitched, and the tyranny was such that no one dared to apply to him for the discharge of any of his ministerial functions. He was at last attacked in his house, plundered, and driven with his family out of the town. This brought the whole nest of iniquity to light. Eller died, however, before anything could be undertaken against him, in 1750; Wulfing was deposed, and died in misery, although with hypocritical joy and satisfaction.

SECTION VI.—*The Spirit of Legal Righteousness and Hypocrisy which connected itself with this Revival.*

HYPOCRISY is a pretending to something we do not possess. It may arise either from design or from self-deception. The former adopts the form of external sanctity to obtain certain ends, and is only found where religion is respected. The latter may exist among formal as well as real Christians. Among the former it occurs when persons who have no real experience of religion in their own hearts, being brought into contact with real Christians, adopt their language, which they use in a very different sense, and yet imagine themselves to feel all that this language is intended to express. Among real Christians it exists when they continue the observance of forms, or the use of expressions, which are no

longer expressive of the real state of their feelings. Both kinds of hypocrisy are often found in connexion with true revivals of religion; and it argues great ignorance of the subject, when on this account such revivals are condemned as evil. In the period of which we are speaking, intentional hypocrisy occurred most frequently at the courts of those Princes who were favourable to piety. Of this number was Henry II. of Reuss, the Count of Stolberg-Wernegeroda, Duke Ernest of Saalfeld, Prince Augustus of Mecklenburg, and the king of Denmark. Not only clergymen, but also laymen, found that they could more easily obtain advancement in these courts when they adopted the language of Christians. Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful that many would adopt this language without any real piety. This was particularly the case at the court of Wernegeroda: the Count was no sooner dead than the whole court assumed a different tone. The same was also the case in that of the Duke of Saalfeld. Semler says, that his father, who was a preacher at this court, was at first not inclined to accommodate himself to its religious tone, but when he was to be sent to the university in order to secure a stipend for him, his father saw fit to adopt the prevalent phraseology. Even in the university at Halle, there was a temptation to the same evil. Whenever the students wished to obtain places in the gift of the professors, they adopted the language which they knew would most effectually recommend them.

Secondly, the hypocrisy arising from self-deception. Instances of this kind of deception may be remarked in the history of the university of Halle, both among the professors and students. Of this, the otherwise highly respectable Professor Baumgarten appears to have been an example. This man, who appeared to live a pious life, seems yet not to have had that decided experience of religion which distinguished his colleagues. Study seems to have rendered him cold and indifferent to more vital subjects; yet he adopted the pious languages and usages of those around him. In the latter part of his life, however, he departed considerably from both. With respect to the students, it is clear from the lives of Michaelis, Semler, and Noesselt, that they used the expressions most expressive of religious experience, when possessing nothing more than a general respect for the subject. It seems, also, that the terms, *converted*, *regenerated*, and the like, were often applied to those who were merely moral and respectful in their deportment.

In every considerable revival the excitement assumes something of a peculiar individual character. The character of the revival produced by Spener may be viewed in a three-fold light. First, in reference to the language and modes of expression adopted. These were throughout biblical, and adapted to the age. Among the Moravians as among the Catholics, this was not so much the case, as their language is more mystical, and more accommodated to the New Platonic Philosophy. Secondly, in reference to the means of edification. These consisted principally in meetings for reading

the scriptures, prayer, and singing ; making the Bible a constant companion and adviser ; regular family worship, and frequent attendance upon church. All this is according to the scriptures. Among the Moravians, as in the class-meetings of the Methodists, there were departures from the examples set us in the Bible ; but it must be remarked, that on account of the change of circumstances, it is not to be expected that everything of this nature can always be regulated precisely according to the scripture model. Thirdly, in reference to the form which the spirit of Christian enterprise assumed. This was marked negatively by the rejection of all amusements, expensive either of time or money ; by an anxious desire to prevent learning gaining an ascendancy over piety in the hearts of the students, and by discountenancing everything inconsistent with the greatest simplicity and moderation in all the habits of life. Positively, by a constant desire to win souls to Jesus Christ, zeal to promote the Gospel among the Jews and heathens, and the erection of benevolent and pious institutions.

It will be instructive to examine how far in all these three respects perversions and abuses occurred. First, in regard to the language. Francke and Spener are by no means chargeable with laying upon this point too much importance. They freely acknowledged what was good in the writings of the mystics, although the language in which it was conveyed was entirely different from that which they had adopted. But the followers of these good men are in many cases open to the accusation of having had a partial and exclusive fondness for their own peculiar phraseology. Gotthilf, Francke, and Bogatzky, are marked examples of this. They rejected too freely the language of the Moravians, and condemned unnecessarily many expressions of the orthodox school, which they said sounded too *morally*. The same was the case with the language of the mystics. From this arose, among other Christians, a great dislike to what was called the Halle phraseology. In regard to the means of edification, it cannot be denied that there were many abuses. Too much stress was laid upon private meetings for devotion, and upon always mingling religion in common conversation, which gave rise to a great deal of hypocrisy. In Halle it was often the case that from the desire of bringing young men just arrived at the university to the knowledge of religion, they were called upon to attend all the devotional meetings. Too much nourishment produced satiety. Many who attended these exercises had no real love to religion, and were, therefore, rather repulsed than attracted by this frequency. This excess of meetings was peculiarly great upon the Sabbath. There was a devotional meeting in the morning for the citizens, another in the afternoon in the houses of the professors, and in the evening in private families, besides three regular services in the church. The spirit of devotion could not easily be sustained through all this. The exegetical lectures also were always more or less practical and devotional. The students found it difficult to pursue their studies, and if they omit-



ted any of the meetings, with a view of gaining more time for this purpose, they were looked upon with an evil eye. In some places it was carried so far, that threats and stratagems were employed to secure the attendance of the young people. Semler says that when he was a student in the Gymnasium in Saalfeld, he was induced by threats and cunning to attend these meetings, and as soon as he had done so, congratulations were sent to his father upon his conversion. The duty of prayer also was often made too mechanical. The orthodox party were accustomed to written forms, but the Halle school recommended extempore prayer. This was soon abused, and the ability to make a long extempore prayer was regarded as the best evidence of piety. The Duke of Coburg made the boys in the Gymnasium pray before him, one after another, to see which of them were really converted and worthy of receiving a stipend for the university. We may also under this head speak of a perversion in reference to the character of the inward religious exercises, which arose out of the doctrines of Spener and Francke. These good men had opposed the view taken of the doctrine of atonement by the orthodox, which allowed a man to live as he pleased, and yet hope for its benefits. In Halle, this doctrine and that of the law were united, but without the legal spirit which afterwards gradually arose. When the mode of teaching theology adopted the strict logical form, the religious feelings were also made a matter of rule, and the law became more and more predominant. Whilst this legal spirit was gradually gaining the ascendancy in Halle, the Moravians pursued a different course, recommending a simple and exclusive regard to the great doctrines of the cross by which the feelings were continually cherished; in Halle the great motive to everything was duty, and those who partook most of the evil of which we are speaking, came at last to consider mere external piety the fulfilling of the commands of the Gospel. With the Moravians, on the other hand, a personal intercourse with the Saviour was required, Christ was to be regarded as the friend of the soul, love to him was to be the source of all duties. This system was doubtless more conducive to real heartfelt piety.

Abuses also arose out of the principles adopted with regard to external conduct. It might be expected, from what has been said of the desire of the Halle professors to render learning subordinate to piety, that learning would sink into disrespect. This, however, at least with them, was not the case. They were really learned men, but the connexion which they affected between learning and religion was not intimate; they were learned and pious, but their religion (so to speak) was not learned. There was a difference in their character, also, in this respect; some of them, as Baumgarten, were devoted almost exclusively to learning, whilst others, who partook more of the spirit of Spener, laid upon it less importance. Had they succeeded in making their religion more scientific, it is probable that Semler would not have taken the course which he afterwards pursued. The principles of the Halle teachers, re-

specting worldly amusements, were, that a Christian who was really desirous of devoting himself to the service of God, could have no time for these amusements; that the command, *be not conformed to the world*, which should regulate all the conduct of the Christian, was inconsistent with their enjoyment, and that everything should be performed with prayer and joyful confidence in God. These principles are purely evangelical, and by no means lead to the universal condemnation of every enjoyment. By the followers of Spener and Francke, they were carried too far, and perverted. On the one hand these amusements were regarded as more dangerous than they really were, and on the other, neglecting them was made a merit of. What Francke had recommended upon evangelical principles, became a legal yoke. Many were excluded from the Lord's Supper, if detected in playing cards or dancing. The Count Henry of Reuss commanded all the preachers within his territories to act upon this principle; on the other hand, the orthodox carried their boldness in regard to these subjects to a great length. An orthodox preacher published a form of prayer, for card-players, to teach them to pray for success. The Swiss Mystic, Nicholas von der Flühe, expressed himself in the following excellent manner upon this subject, when a gay vain young man, gaudily dressed, came to him and asked him how he liked him. The wise man answered him, "Is your heart good, so are your clothes good; but if your heart were good you would not wear such clothes." The moderation in the use and enjoyment of the things of this world, recommended by the Pietists, was not monkish, but evangelical. The elder Knapp was a beautiful example of this Gospel simplicity. Noesselt, in his life, says of him with propriety, "*Vita ejus erat commentatio aeternitatis.*" Of abuse in this respect we have nothing to remark.

We have said, that the spirit of Christian enterprise was also marked by an earnest desire to bring others to the knowledge of Christ, not only nominal Christians, but also the heathen. This desire the Moravians richly inherited. In the second generation we notice a two-fold perversion of this feeling. We find, in regard to many, it ceased to be a real inward desire, but was regarded as a mere duty; and that they thought they had fulfilled this duty, as far as nominal Christians were concerned, when they had merely introduced religious conversation. And secondly, we remark in many a spirit of self-sufficiency which led them to forget that they could only point out the way; and the Gospel was often urged so unseasonably upon careless persons, as to drive them further than ever from religion. In conducting the missionary establishments we have nothing in the way of abuse to remark, excepting that some of the latter missionaries renounced the faith and became deists. It was from these establishments that the distinguished Ziegenbalg and Schwarz proceeded, who laboured with such success among the heathen. The Jewish institution, conducted by Professor Callenberg, produced the celebrated mis-

sionary Stephen Schulze, a man of distinguished talents and learning, uniting zeal and great self-denial. He rejected every offer of professional preferment, and restricted himself to the life of a mechanic, that he might preach the Gospel to the Jews. His work, entitled, "The Leadings of God through Europe, Asia, and Africa," contains the results of his observations, made during his twenty years' travelling through these countries, and is replete with interesting information. Another manifest action of the spirit of religious activity, which we mentioned, was the erection of orphan houses and asylums for the poor. The Orphan House in Halle was conducted by the elder Freylinghausen and the elder Knapp. Many similar establishments were formed in various parts of Germany, where the students of Halle were settled. No abuse arose from this source.

We close this review with a few reflections, which are naturally suggested by the history we have given. The view we have taken of this period, teaches us how the various systems of theology may become hostile to vital piety, not merely unbelief in its diversified forms, but orthodoxy itself and supranaturalism, which assumes a position of hostility whenever it is nothing more than mere speculative knowledge. Of this truth this period affords us remarkable examples. It teaches us further, that the revival of religion and the outpouring of the spirit, as in the days of the apostles, is possible in our times, if Christianity be only properly exhibited in the life and from the pulpit. And it teaches us also, how great may be the influence of a few pious men. The Halle school spread its doctrines to Sweden, Denmark, and even to Greece. And, finally, in comparing the revival of this period with that which exists in our own days, we may remark some points in which the latter has an advantage over the former. It is more guarded from the perversions which usually attend seasons of religious excitement. Religion is now less restrained, and therefore more variously developed, and is more intimately connected with learning, so that we may hope to see theology as a science so regularly constructed and guarded, as to preserve it from those attacks which proved fatal to the former systems. It is at the same time true, that these advantages may easily be perverted; an event which can be prevented only by our laying to heart the great lesson taught us by the period under review, which is, that a proper knowledge of the truths of Christianity cannot be obtained without a sanctified state of the feelings, an experience of their vital influence upon our own hearts. The perversion to which we are most exposed is, that the knowledge of religion will come to be regarded as a mere affair of the intellect, that the truths through which men are to be sanctified and saved will be calmly discussed, as a source of intellectual enjoyment, without being brought into the heart, or made to operate upon the life.



## II.—HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN FAITH AND INFIDELITY.

SECTION I.—*Introductory Remarks on Faith and Infidelity.*

WE introduce these remarks with an expression of Goethe, which, if he himself did not fully understand, becomes so much the more important for those who have learned from personal experience, what faith and infidelity really are. In his “West Oestlicher Divan,” page 224, he says, that “the great and deepest theme of the history of the world and of man, is the conflict between faith and unbelief.” Those who can fully comprehend these words, will feel their truth. Man finds himself in this world on an isolated point, he knows not whence he comes nor whither he goes: he knows nothing but the spot upon which he awoke, and upon which he is soon to close his eyes for ever. Were he not by faith able to rise above himself and this dreary life, he would have nothing to do, but with high-minded calmness to resign all hope of attaining the end to which his nature prompts him to aspire. As the world and God, time and eternity, annihilation and salvation, are the great conflicting points upon which human life turns, the ground and centre of the conflict lies in the struggle between faith and unbelief. The contemplation of this struggle, therefore, must either have the tendency to bring us to a more elevated consciousness of the high destiny to which God has called us, or to the expectation of that bottomless abyss of unconscious existence which is the result of all logical infidelity. Infidelity, in its widest sense, is a disposition which leads us to admit nothing as true which is not the result of our own reasonings or deduction:—faith, on the other hand, is that disposition which, influenced either by an outward or inward necessity, admits as true what is not merely by logical inference rendered certain. The great question here presents itself, What is the result to which we are led when we logically pursue the path of scepticism? that is, when we are determined to form a logical system respecting human and divine things with no other guide than speculation. There is something in the heart of man which leads him to believe, whether he wishes it or not. But there is also something in the fallen nature of man which prompts to scepticism. And as the evil in our nature (until restored by Christ) prevails over the good, the tendency to unbelief is more powerful than the tendency to faith. Yet the disposition to faith constantly opposes itself to the contrary disposition. Hence it is that very few pursue their scepticism to its legitimate results, and that there are so few thorough systems of infidelity in the world. For the biblical Christian, however, it must ever appear safer and better that the system should be carried out, instead of being checked in its course, and moulded into a form which floats between heaven and earth, and can justify itself neither at the tribunal of philosophy, nor that of the Bible. Superficial men content themselves with such a system, which satisfies their more common

feelings, but which lulls them into a dangerous security. A system which is throughout consequent, and is prepared to win or lose all, is more worthy of respect, and at the same time safer, as it affords more hope of return, since the necessity of having something to believe is too deeply seated in the human heart to permit us to rest satisfied with the terrible results of consequent scepticism. Schelling, therefore (see the preface to the first volume of his philosophical works), has reason to reproach those with cowardice who, having raised themselves above external things and committed themselves to the guidance of speculation, shrink back from the legitimate consequences of such a course. From what has been said, it is evident that there are various grades of sceptical philosophy, from that which has most thoroughly followed out its principles, to that which is most inconsequent and nearest allied to faith. We can, however, distinguish these systems into two classes, the consequent and inconsequent: the former is Pantheism in its diversified forms, the latter is Deism.

### *Pantheistical System.*

We have proposed the question, What is the result of all logical speculation when we have resolved to follow no other guide? The speculation which proceeds by deduction must commence with some first principles or intuitive truths which are supplied by our own consciousness. The point from which it starts is the consciousness of existence. But this is not a consciousness of independent existence, but of an existence depending and grounded upon something else. Hence the speculator in the consciousness of his own existence is, at the same time, conscious of the existence of an original existence (*Urseyn*) upon which his own is founded. First, from this consciousness—the consciousness of personal existence, including that of the original existence, proceeds the speculation or argument; for to this point all is assumed as intuitively true. As soon as the argumentation is commenced, a dilemma presents itself, which, according as the one or the other side is assumed, decides upon all divine and human things. This dilemma is as follows: first, my being presents itself as a person, that is, as possessed of self-efficiency; for if it be a person it is self-active, having no other ground of its actions than itself: but, secondly, I am conscious that my being and actions are dependent and restricted, that the remote ground of my activity is not in myself, but in the original existence. How can these things be reconciled? If there be an original existence, unlimited and independent, which conditions all other existences, there can be no agent out of him which has in itself the last ground of its actions. For if the original existence is the necessary condition of the actions of other existences, it is the only agent.

Since this original existence is active, and in so far as it is the condition of other existences, it is not a mere lifeless substratum,

but is the living active principle in all that is:—and all independent active existence out of the original existence is an impossibility. On the other hand, when I assume as incontrovertible that my individual personal existence, if I regard every individual as a being which has in itself the last ground of its actions, is self-efficient, then the original existence is not unrestricted, since the individual efficient necessarily limit and restrict the efficiency of the original existence, each after its own way conditioning its activity. Hence it appears, that the speculator is encountered at the very outset by the riddle of individual personality. If he will neither renounce this personality, nor the illimitableness of God's efficiency, he must either consent to hold both sides of a contradiction, or turn believer, that is, receive something as true which is not the result of speculation or argumentative deduction; but this is inconsistent with the goal which he has placed before himself. The consequent speculator therefore adopts the following course, as he cannot solve the riddle which every man carries in his own bosom—the consciousness of personality, and the illimitable nature of God; he denies human personality, and presents the following view of the subject. Since God cannot be unlimited, if the personality of men be considered real, this personality can only be apparent. The original unlimited existence which pervades the universe strives through its own activity to become objective to itself, that is, to arrive at self-consciousness; the infinite becomes objective to itself when it reveals itself in the finite, and when this finite revelation is conscious of its unity with the infinite. Hence, from the stone to the angel, individuality is merely apparent, being nothing more than the various modifications of the infinite first principle. Human individuals realize to the greatest perfection the effort of the infinite principle to come to a consciousness of itself; because men, through the faculty of thought, feeling, or imagination, clearly conceive themselves as manifestations of the infinite. This is the manner in which the consequent speculation endeavours to destroy all individual personality. With the rejection of the personality of the finite existences is necessarily connected the rejection of the personality of the infinite. For as the infinite unlimited God arrives at self-consciousness only through the creation of the finite individual, so it is clear, that if we in any sense ascribe personality to him, it can be only the apparent personality which belongs to the finite individual,—this is his life. Other consequences, equally shocking, flow from these principles. If God be the only and universal agent in all being, then is good and evil equally the act of God, and the objective difference between good and evil falls to the ground. The view presented of this subject is as follows: since the infinite remains inactive, having no self-manifestation, excepting so far as it is manifested in the finite, it follows necessarily that God is limited in the world, that is, is but imperfectly developed. But this limitation is not in itself evil, lying in the very necessity of the infinite, and in the infinite



nothing necessary can be evil. Hence all evil which is but imperfect development is incipient good, for every limitation in the finite by virtue of its unity with the infinite is virtually removed. If evil be only limitation, it is only negation, and is necessary to the exciting of life, or effort at developing, since if there were no limitation there could be no progressive pervading of the limited, and all would remain dead. The individual must acknowledge the evil in itself so far, that it must endeavour to remove the limitation, that is, endeavour to render the pervading of the finite by the infinite perfect, but this limitation (evil) is in itself necessary, since without it there could be no development of life.

This system with its consequences presents undoubtedly a series of regular logical deductions, but it contradicts so entirely the deepest feelings, nay, the very nature of the soul, that only a few at any period have been able to embrace it in all its results. Yet even among the ancients we find regularly constructed pantheistical systems, partly ideal and partly materialistical. The most imposing is that of Xenophanes, and that of the later Platonists. We find also among the heathen some who, although they admitted the truth of these systems, felt their annihilating effect on human life. There is a remarkable passage in the *Historia Naturalis* of Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 7, where he says—"There is so much uncertainty in human life, that among all uncertainties, that which is most certain is, that there is nothing certain, and that there is nothing more miserable than the thing called man. In all his misery his greatest consolation is, that God is not Almighty, since he cannot deprive himself of life, which is the greatest good in this wretched state." This system has also in later times appeared in various forms. When speculation became more thorough and consequent, Pantheism appeared under two shapes, as idealism and materialism. The latter, denying the existence of spirit, refers everything to matter and its laws. This system was principally defended by the French academicians at the close of the last century. The grossest work on this subject is "*L'homme Machine*;" and the boldest defender of the system the infamous La Mettrie, court physician, and afterwards court-fool to Frederick the Great. The principal forms of the ideal Pantheism are Spinozism and the nature-philosophy. By Spinoza the system is but imperfectly presented; the nature-philosophers are more thorough and definite. The coarsest advocate of these doctrines is Goerres. In his *Mythology of Asia* he speaks with the greatest boldness of the personality, divinity, and morality of the earth.

The other kind of infidelity of which we spoke, was the inconsequent or Deism.

The deist assumes the existence of the moral law in the breast of man, the existence of personal deity, and of course the doctrine of providence, a future state of rewards and punishment, and immortality. This system is found in antiquity, although held with a very unstable hand, as by Cicero, who properly was a deist;

with more precision and beauty by Pindar, Socrates, and Plutarch, who presented the truth in a manner more analogous to Christian deism. It may be asked in what way the heathen attained this knowledge? We may say that the necessity of such truths lies so deep in the human heart, that a thorough examination of the human soul must have led to their discovery and adoption. But it is very doubtful whether the fallen nature of man would ever have arrived at this knowledge, if it had not been aided by tradition and history. It is far more probable, from a review of the whole history of the human mind, that although this necessity really exists, man would never, unassisted, have attained to the discovery of these truths. At least the three distinguished men just mentioned are far from founding their opinions merely upon speculation; they appeal to tradition,—to the fathers—to earlier revelations of God, which had gradually become corrupted. In modern times deism has assumed a more perfect and better sustained form, and endeavoured to found its claims upon the general reason of man. It maintains that human reason is necessarily led to the above-mentioned truths by mere speculation. If this system did not oppose itself to divine revelation it would be liable to only one objection. It is perfectly correct in saying that the necessities of the human heart lead to the adoption of these truths, and that when these necessities are not suppressed, the feelings of every man will urge their admission. But deism denies the influence of history upon itself. Were it not for what it derives from history it would be nothing, it is ungrateful to Christianity to which it is indebted for all its clearness and stability. It presents itself in opposition to revelation, and pretends to be a system which can justify itself as such at the bar of truth, and to which philosophy lends its sanction; whereas the doctrines of revelation are opposed to reason, and are to be rejected as doctrines to which philosophy does not conduct. As soon as deism takes this ground it presents itself as a system of philosophy. It will only admit what is within the reach of human reason, what it can by argument establish. In this light it is a system utterly unsatisfactory. We have already seen, that when human reason will admit nothing but what it can comprehend, it is led at the very first step to a riddle which it cannot solve. That speculation, if it will be worthy of the name, is necessarily led to deny the personality and liberty of man; but this deism, as admitting rewards and punishments, cannot do. If therefore it be not blind, it must admit that in reference to all its leading doctrines it stands upon the ground of faith, that it can neither render these doctrines comprehensible, nor support them by logical argument. It must admit that it adopts what it cannot defend at the tribunal of speculation, the personality and liberty of man. The deist believes these truths merely upon the ground of experience, and can neither explain nor prove them. But if he is obliged in reference to his most important truths to rely upon experience, and merely *believes* them, he can

no longer object to the believer in the Bible. If he, in reference to other facts, appeals also to experience, and receives truths which he cannot explain and cannot by speculation support, but which he has experienced in his own heart; the consequence of this is, that we are brought to admit that argument is not the only way for attaining a knowledge of the truth. Hence the great Hamann remarks profoundly and truly, in his correspondence with Jacobi, page 19,—“I have repeated it to satiety that it is with the philosophers as with the Jews, neither know what either the law or reason is. Reason, as the law, is given for the knowledge of sin and ignorance, and not of grace and truth. The latter must be revealed; they can neither be found out by speculation nor received from others, nor inherited.”—In other words, the object of philosophising can only be to show that we are thus led to conclusions which pointedly contradict our nature and consciousness, that we are brought into dilemmas which involve us in inextricable contradictions. Speculation thus brings us to a sense of our ignorance and helplessness, and we are forced to seek some other way for arriving at a knowledge of divine things. This other way is history. In the external history the truths of God are communicated as facts, in the history of the heart the truth has the testimony of experience, and thus we are brought to believe in revelation.

## SECTION II.—*Infidelity in the Romish Church.*

SINCE the existence of Christianity, there has always been infidelity in the world, which the most vigorous church discipline is insufficient to suppress. As the necessities of the human heart will ever have a tendency to lead men to faith, pride will as constantly lead to infidelity. We have no accurate knowledge of the extent of infidelity in the Romish Church, where it must lie concealed; but we can designate two forms in which it has displayed itself. A spirit of profound speculation led to mysticism, and through mysticism to pantheism; the spirit of frivolous indifference led to the rejection of the superstitions and the doctrines of the church. To the former class belong John Scotus Erigena, Almarich of Bena, and Dinant in the beginning of the thirteenth century. On the other hand, those who rejected what was superstitious, threw away also what was true. Of this we have early examples, as Simon of Tournay, 1200, Professor of Paris. Of the same class was the Emperor Frederick I. and the disciples of the Arabian philosopher Averroes. These latter held private meetings, in which they ridiculed the truths of the Bible. Infidelity greatly increased at the time of the restoration of letters. In this period many learned men appeared who were either deists or atheists, as for example, the famous Angelus Politianus, who said, “I have once read the New Testament, sed nunquam tempus pejus collocavi;” and the Cardinal Bembo, who, when he found that the learned Sadoletus was engaged in a commentary on the Ro-



mans, said to him, "Mitte tales nugas, non enim decent virum gravem." Other examples may be seen in the letters of Marsilius Ficinus, who was a disciple of the New Platonic philosophy, which led to his embracing Christianity.

### SECTION III.—*Of the Infidelity which manifested itself at the time of the Reformation.*

THE Reformation excited an universal spirit of investigation. Among those who came under the influence of this spirit were many, whose religious feelings were very weak, and who were thus soon led astray; such as Valentin Gentilis, Servetus, John Campanus, and others. To this class also belong the Socinians, who formed a system essentially different from that of the Gospel. Of many we know nothing, as at this period it was dangerous to declare such sentiments. Yet in the south of France we find that a regular society of deists was formed, and that many denied even the immortality of the soul. See on this subject the *Institutions Chrétiennes* of Viret, 1563. These cases, however, are comparatively few; the mass of the Protestants adhered to the faith of the Bible. The first indication of anything like general infidelity manifested itself in England in the middle of the seventeenth century, and far more clearly in the middle of the eighteenth century. From thence it spread to France; even Voltaire availed himself of the English writers, to find objections against Christianity. England and France united to spread the influence to Germany, and Germany spread it to Sweden, Denmark and Russia.

### SECTION IV.—*Infidelity in the Protestant Church in England.*

WE must for a moment attend to the circumstances under which it arose, and the situation of the English church in the latter half of the seventeenth century. This period is one of the most important in the whole course of ecclesiastical history. It is a remarkable fact, that in so small a portion of Christendom, and in so limited a period, such various forms of opinions arose. This period has never been sufficiently studied; we find here all the doctrines which have ever appeared in the Christian church. On the one hand, the greatest latitudinarianism in theory and practice; on the other, the most bigoted adherence to the Catholic church—the greatest looseness and the most ascetic strictness—separatists and independents who would recognise no church, and those who advocated the strictest alliance between the church and state—profound and learned theologians, theosophers, and mystics, who rejected all theology—the warmest and most active practical Christians who scattered blessings around them—and little narrow sects who gave themselves up to every irregularity.

Amidst such discordant elements it is not wonderful that those who sought the truth, without having any deep feeling on the

subject, should be led into infidelity. In no country was the Reformation so much affected by external circumstances as in England. This arose partly from the tyrannical authority with which the houses of Tudor and Stuart forced their opinions upon the people, and partly from the fact that many who wished to promote the Reformation knew so little of the religion of the heart. Hence, when the government changed their opinion, there was a similar change effected in the church—the parties became violent in their hostility to each other, and forgot to govern their proceedings by the rule of the Gospel. Under Elizabeth the parties became more distinct, and separated themselves into the three principal classes, Catholics, Episcopalians, and Puritans. The Episcopalians required the government of the church by bishops—regarded the king as the head of the church—and wished to retain many of the Catholic ceremonies. The Puritans borrowed their principles from the strict Geneva system. They demanded the entire rejection of everything which could call the Popish church to mind—that the church should be disconnected from the state,—that it should be governed by Presbyters—that the pastors should be chosen by the congregations—that a strict church discipline should be introduced, &c. In many respects they were more ascetic than evangelical, demanding too much external exhibition of piety. As under Mary when the Catholics gained the ascendancy—thousands of Protestants bled upon the scaffold, or were left to languish in prison—while the churches were possessed by Catholic clergymen; so under Elizabeth the Episcopal party commenced a similar course of tyranny. Every citizen was obliged to attend church at least once a month upon the pain of imprisonment. Under Cromwell the Puritans obtained the reins—all worldly amusements were forbidden—the theatres were abolished—the Episcopal ritual was curtailed—in the court and army prayer meetings were introduced, &c. This period of Cromwell's ascendancy presents a remarkable spectacle. Cromwell himself manifests in life, such a mixture of religion and hypocrisy, that it is difficult to form a clear idea of his character. It seems clear that this remarkable man had experienced the grace of God upon his heart. He was in his early youth immoral—reformed, and led a pious life—he connected himself with the Puritans—studied diligently the Bible—avoided everything which could give offence, and distinguished himself by his benevolence. When the war broke out, he appeared in public life. As a Puritan, he felt called upon to make war upon the king and the Episcopal church. After the execution of the king he became Protector. During this period the form of religion was spread among the people to an unexampled degree—in most cases, however, it was merely form. The soldiers held prayer meetings with Cromwell: when the army took the field, it was always amidst the singing of hymns; and the commanders excited the soldiers by repeating passages from the Bible. Every irregularity was severely punished—every soldier carried his Bible with him.

The Episcopal party was given to licentiousness ; out of hatred to the Puritans they sung immoral songs in entering battle ; indecent plays were everywhere acted, and immodest books circulated. In reference to Cromwell himself, it is true, that after his entrance upon public life, he showed himself very ambitious, but that he was cruel cannot be said. And it should be recollected that his party, feeling themselves bound to act according to the examples given in the Old Testament, acted from a sense of duty "in rooting out the Canaanites," as they expressed it. It is common to ascribe the king's death to Cromwell, but this is not correct, the real author of the king's death was Ireton. Even the enemies of Cromwell bear testimony to the goodness of his life—the court physician of Charles I. and II. says, that "in the court of Cromwell no immoral person was endured." And the venerable Baxter says, "that until he attained to honour, he possessed the pure fear of God." Many of his expressions also are still preserved, which seem to prove his knowledge of religion. But as true piety among the Puritans was mingled with so many serious errors—piety itself soon sunk into suspicion. Immediately after this puritanical period, one of an entirely different character was introduced. When Cromwell was removed from the stage, his strict laws ceased to operate ; and the restoration of Charles II. produced a complete change. Charles was a frivolous, licentious man—of religion he had nothing but superstitious fear, which led to his turning Catholic ; a fact which he was afraid to avow, but which became known after his death. After that, around Cromwell, men had collected who had the Bible ever in their hands and in their mouths, and the voice of prayer had been heard upon every hand—of a sudden, we find a very different race figuring upon the stage. The licentious part of the nobility formed the court of Charles II.—plays, the most of them immoral, and all similar amusements were again introduced. Connected with this, many were secretly inclined to the Catholic faith. The principal personages at the court of Charles, were the Duke of Buckingham, and the profligate earl of Rochester ; the latter, indeed, was converted upon his death-bed, and died a Christian.

It was under these circumstances, that the various sects which mark the history of England in this period made their appearance. An account of many of them may be seen in the work of William Boehme, "Eight Books, upon the Reformation of the Church in England." Altona, 1734. The principal of these are the following : 1. The Familists, who maintained that, in order to present Christianity in its proper light, all Christians should be reduced to one family : they opposed themselves to all church forms. 2. The Ranters. 3. Antinomians. 4. Muggletonians. 5. Seekers. The Baptists and Quakers also arose in this period. There was also a sect, who professed to be the followers of Jacob Boehme, whose leader was Pordage, a physician ; and the Angel Brothers, or Philadelphians, who also adopted the mystical doctrines of Boehme—



their leader was Johanna Leade. Besides this, there were the Latitudinarians, many of whom embraced Platonic principles and sought to establish Christianity upon this basis. To this class belongs the celebrated Cudworth, whose work, the "Intellectual System," is a treasury of various erudition. The Deists also made their appearance in this age—of this latter class the first and the most respectable was Lord Herbert, who died 1648. His most important works are: "De Veritate, prout distinguitur a Revelatione, a verisimili, a possibili et a falsa," and "De Religione Gentilium." Lord Herbert is acknowledged to have been a man of no common talents—he has a great resemblance to our philosopher Jacobi, and was indeed the Jacobi of his age. He possessed, what was not then very common, an honest heart, and sought the truth with much earnestness. He seems to have been led to his deistical principles by the bitter contentions of the various sects—the arrogance of the Puritans and the haughtiness of the Catholic and Episcopal clergy. This first excited his doubts upon the subject of Revelation, and he investigated the subject in a manner which showed he was desirous of arriving at some firm foundation. He wished, in the first place, to ascertain the principle of truth in man—and found, upon reflecting upon the nature of the understanding, that it could be no sure means of attaining a knowledge of divine things; since it was so apt to draw false conclusions, and was so easily blinded by the corrupt state of the feelings. He hence assumed as the ground of truth, what he called instinct. There is, he said, a certain instinct in man, which testifies to the truth of certain things, about which it is useless any further to reason. Such truths are: 1. the existence of God; 2. that man is dependent on God, and is bound to reverence him; 3. that piety is the harmony of all the human faculties; 4. that there is an essential difference between good and evil; and 5. there is a future state of rewards and punishments. These principles, he said, include all religion; that this is the fact, he maintained was not only proved by instinct, but by the consensus gentium. In so far as Lord Herbert acknowledges these doctrines, he suffered himself to be led by that deeply seated feeling of the human heart, which testifies to their truth. He overlooked, however, the fact, that this feeling is never developed without historical influence; or, in other words, that these truths are never discovered or acknowledged beyond the influence of Christianity. He also overlooked the fact, that these doctrines are empty and powerless, as soon as they are conceived in any other manner than that in which they are presented in the Christian religion. God is only for men a living God, when, according to the Gospel, he is regarded as the author of a plan of salvation; and when he has historically (not merely through the understanding) revealed himself to his creatures. The difference between good and evil cannot be effectively known, when man is not, agreeably to the Christian system, regarded as fallen: and piety, in the proper sense of the term, is only possible, when men

without self-righteousness are willing to be saved by grace, Lord Herbert, therefore, should have acknowledged that his five truths would remain pure abstractions, unless more definitely presented, and confirmed by a revelation,—and this would have led him back to Christianity, to which he was really indebted for these five doctrines.

Charles Blount, who died 1697, was one of Lord Herbert's followers. He professed himself a deist, and yet acknowledged that deism could have no authority over men, if it did not rest upon an historical basis in Christianity. He at first directed his attacks against particular points in the Christian religion, upon historical and critical principles, endeavouring particularly to render the authority of the four Evangelists suspicious. He maintained there was but little difference between the history of Christ and that of Apollonius of Tyana.

The most important deistical writer of this period was John Toland, who, while he brought many acute historical and critical objections against Christianity, was led by his speculating turn of mind to Pantheism. Toland was born in 1671 of Catholic parents. He seems early to have imbibed an abhorrence of the superstitions of the Catholic church, and soon joined the sect of the Puritans. He went to Holland to pursue his studies, under the celebrated Arminians, Limborch and Clericus. The spirit of inquiry was here awaked in his mind, which does not appear to have been of the purest character; he, as the French deists, was mainly influenced by vanity. When he returned to England he appeared as the defender of deism, and endeavoured in public societies, coffee houses and other places of general resort, to make proselytes to his opinions. In his 20th year he published his work against the Lutheran Clergy, under the title, "The Tribe of Judah." We see that the corruption of the clergy was one of the causes which led to his hostility to Christianity. His principal work, which, both from its contents and influence, is deserving of attention, is "Christianity without Mystery," which he published in 1696. This book is written with a great deal of talent, as is confessed by Leibnitz, who wrote a refutation of it. The modern rationalists are neither so acute nor so original. He attacked few particular points, but rather wished to establish general principles. In the Introduction he speaks of the excommunicating and persecuting spirit of the clergy. If, says he, you are opposed to the Catholics, and yet differ in the smallest point from the Lutherans, the latter condemn you; if you are against the Lutherans, and yet differ from the Catholics, the Catholics condemn you; if you are equally indifferent to both, you are sure to be condemned by both. His manner of reasoning is as follows: He first defines what he means by Reason; he understands by it in its wider sense, the understanding, in a more restricted sense, the power of judgment and deduction. He then presents the position, that there can be nothing in Revelation contrary to Reason, which he thus proves: Reason is as much

from God as the Revelation can be,—if the one contradicts the other, God contradicts himself. He maintains also that it is not proper to say, that Reason has been corrupted by the fall, since by the fall we have not lost the power to judge and draw inferences. In this respect reason is not corrupted; it is only so far corrupted as it is blinded by our evil feelings. This reasoning is true or false just as it is explained and applied. If what we decide to be contrary to our reason, falls completely within the reach of our understanding, so that it can be fully comprehended and the contrariety clearly made out, then it is impossible that a revelation can teach it. It cannot be said in a revelation that Jericho is only a day's journey, and yet a thousand miles from Jerusalem. But a revelation may contain what it is impossible for us to reconcile with our reason and what apparently contradicts it; as for example, the personality of man and the absoluteness of God, or the free agency of man and the agency and government of God; the understanding would decide that one or the other must be given up, yet both are facts which rest upon our own consciousness and experience. The whole difficulty is, that the subject lies beyond our reach, the understanding is not competent to its comprehension. The distinction therefore between what is contrary to reason and what is above it, although it has been much controverted, is perfectly just. When I say that certain truths are above reason, I mean that they lie in a region for which the understanding has no organ. But if I say that a thing is contrary to reason, I acknowledge the understanding as competent to judge of the subject, or in other words as having an organ therefor.

Toland's second position, that a revelation can contain no contradictions, rests upon the same ground; if the subject falls within the reach of the understanding and the contradiction be clear, a revelation cannot communicate it. What is a contradiction in this sense, is a *non-ens*, a nothing. But care must be taken to observe whether the subject be not presented with conditions, which remove it beyond the limits of our experience.

His third position is, that it is a perversion of ideas to say that, what cannot be believed upon grounds furnished by reason, must be believed because it is revealed. He maintained that the revelation contains nothing but the objects of faith; believing them depends upon the grounds which reason can present in their support. The matter is thus, The first point to be ascertained is, whether what presents itself as a revelation, be really from God: is that ascertained, the revelation is not only the object but the ground of faith, since anything being revealed is obviously the best possible ground for believing it. This work of Toland excited great attention, it was read in England, France, and Germany. No less than fifty refutations of it were published, the best is that by Leibnitz, "*Annotatiunculæ subitaneæ ad Tolandi Librum*," 1701; and the interesting work by the same author, "*Discours sur la conformité de la Raison et de la Foi*." Toland continued his efforts to promote



his doctrines, and published several other not unimportant works. The most interesting is his last, in which he acknowledges himself a Pantheist. The title is "*Pantheisticon, sive formula celebrandae sodalitatis Socraticae*," 1720. In this book he presented the pantheistical doctrines in the form of the English Liturgy. An alternate chant is thus given, between a moderator and chorus. "Moderator—*Profanum arcete vulgus*. Chorus—*Clusa tutaque sunt omnia*. Moderator—*In mundo, omnia sunt unum, unumque est omne in omnibus*. Chorus—*Quod omne in omnibus Deus est, aeternus et immensus, neque genitus neque interiturus*."

— The next deistical author whom we shall mention, is the well-known philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, who died 1679. His philosophical system is an entirely peculiar exhibition of the human mind, with which his religious opinions are only partially connected. He maintained that God and the angels were not spirits, and denied the liberty of man. He acknowledged a revelation, and made the well-grounded distinction of a two-fold criterion of a communication from God, the one for those to whom the revelation was immediately made, and the other for those to whom it was by these messengers of God communicated. He maintained, as a main point, that a revelation must teach fidelity to the king, which, in the time of the Jewish theocracy, was God. At present, monarchs are the representatives of Christ, and that those who communicate a revelation must perform miracles. The scriptures are the conclusion of all revelation, and are the representatives of all the prophets. He was moderate and proper in all he said in reference to the relation between reason and revelation. Reason, he said, was not opposed to the Bible, but it must be humble, and not presume to penetrate too far. The expression, "to bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ," does not mean that we must renounce the use of reason, but that we must be obedient, and not assume authority. The mysteries of faith, he said, might be compared to medicines, which must be taken just as they are, and after they have mingled themselves in the system manifest their power. He also directed his investigations to the criticism and language of the scriptures. Here, however, he is often perfectly arbitrary; he denied the authenticity of the Pentateuch, of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel; and endeavoured to justify his doubts, by remarks which were not altogether destitute of foundation. His materialism led him into very gross ideas of the doctrine of inspiration, and that respecting the angels. Denying the existence of spirit, he made the angels nothing more than fine aetherial beings, yet maintained that in all probability they never appeared to men, considering all accounts of their appearance founded upon deceptions of the imagination. Inspiration, he said, could be nothing else than the infusion of a kind of subtle air; when spoken of in reference to the Bible, it must mean a mode of communication analogous to breathing into. The idea of the kingdom of God is not metaphorical, according to his doctrine, neither

is this an invisible kingdom, but kings are the representatives of God, until the coming of Christ. They were also to be regarded as lords of our faith, and authoritative interpreters of scripture. Miracles, he said, were natural events, designed to answer some important purpose. Of the doctrine of redemption he gave much the same representation as that presented by Grotius. God is a moral governor, men cannot make satisfaction for sins, God can set what price he sees fit for our redemption; under the Old Testament he sets sacrifices, under the New, Christ and his death. Christians, as the subjects of this king, must cordially submit to this arrangement. Hobbes, properly speaking, made no proselytes, but his materialism produced for a time considerable effect, the doctrine of human liberty and the existence of spirits were rendered doubtful in the minds of many, and even a species of atheism became to a certain extent prevalent.

Lord Shaftesbury died in 1773. This man was a fine writer and a polished man of the world; and his manner of reasoning was such as common men of the world usually adopted. Through his talents and popular style of argument, he attained considerable influence; his writings in twenty years passed through seven editions. They were, as might be expected, principally read by persons of rank; in 1760-80 they were also much circulated in France and Germany. The character of what he has written upon the subject of religion is such as might be expected from a worldly man, who feared to acknowledge the solemn truths of the Bible, and who wished to reduce theology to the level of all other sciences. His principal works are his "Characteristics," 3 vols., "Miscellaneous Treatises," and "The Moralist." In the first mentioned work there is a treatise on fanaticism, in which his religious views are principally presented. The following circumstance gave occasion to this discourse. There were a number of enthusiasts who went to England from the continent to claim the protection of the government under the persecutions to which they were exposed. They were subject to bodily agitations and ecstasies. The people turned them into ridicule, and made puppets which imitated their motions. Shaftesbury embraced this occasion to publish his general principle, that ridicule is the best test of truth; what is really holy and reverend remains such, however much it may be derided; but what cannot stand this test can be neither holy nor reverend. This is a principle which to a certain extent is true. Ridicule cannot destroy the respect of a pious man for the truth, but its influence upon worldly men may be entirely different. He appealed to the example of Socrates, and said that the greatest service ever rendered that philosopher, was the ridicule of Aristophanes; which only drove away what was extravagant, whilst what was truly excellent will remain to be held in admiration by all generations. He also maintained that man would never arrive at the truth if he gave way to melancholy; that cheerfulness was necessary for the discovery and perception of the truth. It was, therefore, a great per-

version to consider that as truth, which was declared upon a death-bed to be such, when the patient was surrounded by so many circumstances adapted to render him sorrowful. Hence he contended against all abstruse doctrines, maintaining that plain honest morality and belief in God was all that men need. Revelation and inspiration are merely fanaticism. Their advocates indeed say that the former is a real influence of God upon the soul, the latter false and pretended, but the expression of both, he said, was so much the same that to make the distinction was no easy task. Philosophical speculation, to be properly directed, must always be connected with wit, which produces the greatest excitement. In his miscellaneous works he speaks of revealed religion. He lamented that the Jewish religion was so melancholy. David, particularly, was a great hypochondriac, yet he loved dancing and music, and introduced them into the service of religion. The Old Testament, too, contains many pleasant stories, such as that of Jonah. He was even profane enough to apply his witticisms to Jesus Christ. On the whole, he thought the heathen religion entitled to the praise of being the most cheerful. It is easy to see that such frivolity might produce considerable effect upon a certain class of men who desire nothing more than to rid themselves of the serious and threatening doctrines of religion.

Anthony Collins, who died 1729, was a man of exemplary life, and distinguished by many estimable qualities. His writings, which are distinguished by great acuteness, contain much which modern rationalists have brought forward as new; whole sections may be found translated in the modern dogmatical works—"Priestcraft in Perfection," "An Essay on Freethinking," and "The Grounds and Reasons of Christianity," are his principal works. In the second work he says, nothing can be true which cannot stand the test of free investigation; the truth must be impregnable, and that it is only when every man is allowed freely to present his opinions, that we can hope to arrive at the truth, as every man views the subject through a different glass. Scepticism can only be effectually controverted, when allowed to present all its objections. In the "Grounds and Reasons," he presents many weighty and important thoughts; his attack was directed to the point in which Christianity is most assailable, although he did not make the most of its advantages. His object was to prove that Christianity was founded upon Judaism. This, those who admit the Jewish revelation would of course allow, since Judaism is represented as preparation for Christianity, the Jewish theocracy containing, in external rites, what is more explicitly taught in the New Testament. Hence those who cannot believe in the Old Testament, must reject the New, if Christianity be nothing but reformed Judaism. Collins however wished to prove that, admitting the authority of the Old Testament, Christianity must be given up, as it rested upon a wrong interpretation and application of the Old Testament prophecies. The predictions of a Messiah cannot be



made to refer to Jesus Christ, of whose life no historical circumstance is clearly foretold. The prophecies, commonly explained of Christ, really refer to other persons, as Isaiah liii. to Jeremiah; Daniel ix. 4 to the high priest Onias. With regard to miracles, he maintained they could never be produced as evidences of the truth of doctrines, such external facts and doctrines were of an entirely different nature, and it was therefore a *μεταβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος* when we would argue from one to the other; an objection which Lessing has presented more fully. There is something of truth in this argument, at least, we may admit that the defence of Christianity was, at this time, rested too exclusively upon miracles and prophecies. Collins, however, was entirely wrong in the manner in which he argued about the prophecies of the Old Testament, requiring all the distinctness and precision of historical narration. But it seems to lie in the very nature of prophecy, that it should be less plain than history, and it therefore cannot be expected that when God communicated the knowledge of the future, he should make it as clear as the present or the past. He was also arbitrary in his interpretation of those predictions in which the greatest particularity is to be found, as Isaiah liii., and Micah iv. With regard to miracles it may be admitted, that they cannot be produced as evidence of doctrines which contain contradictions; but they prove that they who perform them, stand in more immediate connexion with God, and when they are at the same time teachers, their miracles are evidence of the truth of what they communicate.

Thomas Wollaston died 1733. He was a professor in the university of Cambridge, though subsequently displaced from his office. From reading the works of Origen he was led to adopt the opinion, that the miracles of the New Testament were not facts, but merely a symbolical method of teaching some particular truth. This was not in itself absolutely inconsistent with faith in the Gospel; but it led him to endeavour to discover historical objections to the account of the miracles; and these objections were employed by others to discredit everything of a miraculous character in the Bible.

Thomas Morgan, who died in 1743, is distinguished as being the most accurate among the English deists, in the historical and critical objections which he advanced against Christianity. His objections are directed against many particular passages, and he has, in many points, anticipated the infidels of France and Germany. What he says also of a doctrinal character is not deficient in acuteness, and all his writings are marked by great frankness and openness. He appears to have been led to his sceptical views by the doctrine then prevalent in the church of England, that Christianity was susceptible of demonstration, an opinion which, in our own and in every age, has led to error. He did not recollect, that in so far as revelation supposes the existence of faith, it can only through experience be felt to be true, that its best evidence must be sought in the experience of the heart. Morgan, in his search

for truth, was led from one sect to another ; he was a Presbyterian preacher, then Arian, then Socinian, then Quaker, then Deist. He called himself a moral philosopher. His attacks were principally directed against Judaism, which he said was full of deceit and fanaticism, containing very injurious representations of God. Christianity, he said, was nothing more than sublimated Judaism, containing indeed many excellent moral precepts ; but if we compare the incredible portions with those worthy of credit, the former will be found greatly to predominate. Miracles he said were foolish. His investigation of the account of the resurrection of Christ is distinguished by extraordinary acuteness. He maintained also that the apostles differed in their doctrines from each other. He was not only open in avowing his opinions, but also offensive, as when he says, that if God condemns all those who cannot believe the miraculous accounts contained in the Bible, he must adopt the prayer, Oh God ! why hast thou not created me as stupid as other people, that I also might believe and be saved. And in another place, he says, that revealed religion is a serpent in the bosom of man, which poisons his whole nature.

Infidelity assumed a bolder form, in the celebrated Lord Bolingbroke, secretary of state under Queen Anne. His life, which was that of a libertine, is an index to his doctrines. He boasted that he had tasted every pleasure it was possible for him to enjoy ; and died as he had lived, cursing religion and those around him. He first published his " Letters on the Study and Utility of History," which is in many respects a valuable work. In his third letter, he speaks particularly against the Jewish history, and asserted it was a blasphemy against God, to say that he had inspired the Old Testament. The Pentateuch is as much a romance as Don Quixote, and every page of the Old Testament is full of the most palpable errors. He committed the great mistake, in opposition to his own better knowledge as a historian, of regarding and treating Moses and Aaron precisely as though they had lived and acted under the same circumstances with men of his own time. In his " Essays and Fragments," he attacked Christianity from various sides. He made a distinction between Christianity as taught by Paul, and as taught by Christ himself. Many of the doctrines he said were nonsensical ; and the doctrine of Redemption, which was the main point in Christianity, was a heathen doctrine. Christ and his apostles were all fanatics. He also attacked the law of marriage, as allowing but one wife, and not admitting divorce. He seems, on the whole, to have approached very near to materialistical atheism, denying the moral attributes of God, and admitting only his wisdom and power.

We must also mention a tradesman, Thomas Chubb, who entered the lists against Christianity. He was a tallow-chandler, but early obtained considerable knowledge. His writings are far from being unworthy of notice ; he attacked many points with adroitness and talent. He agrees most with Morgan, excepting that he more ex-

plicitly opposed the morality of the New Testament. He accuses Christianity of favouring fanaticism, and of not inculcating patriotism. He questioned the doctrines of Providence and a future state of retribution. He proceeded at last from deism to materialism. It is, from his example, obvious to what deism leads when it is not checked by a strong sense of morality.

Most of the writers hitherto mentioned, directed their attacks principally against the doctrines, rather than the practical part of Christianity. One of the English deists wrote a work, however, in which he endeavoured to turn the practical part of our religion into ridicule; this was Berhard Mandeville, a man of French descent, who died in London, after a dissolute life, in 1733. He represented the morality of the New Testament as so strict that, if followed out, it would necessarily lead to the destruction of the state. The great defect of the Christian system was that it condemned pride and ambition, which were far more powerful motives to good than religion. In his "Fable of the Bees," he represents a community of bees, which, although abounding in vices, continued to flourish; for vice itself, to continue, must have some regard to the interests of the community. The bees suddenly took the notion to bring about a high state of virtue in order to arrive at a still more prosperous condition. The gods heard their prayer, but the state soon went to pieces. The soldiers were disbanded because there was no war, the lawyers were idle because there was no contention, refinement and learning disappeared because there was no ambition." He hence drew the conclusion that vice is absolutely essential to the good of the state; all that is requisite is to keep it within certain bounds.

The writers hitherto mentioned, attacked Christianity in detail, or endeavoured to establish some few general principles, without attempting to erect a regular system of Deism. This was first effected by Matthew Tindal, in his "Christianity as old as the Creation," published in 1760; a work which has been called the Deistical Bible. Tindal was employed in the service of James II., and became on this account a Catholic. Under William III. he turned Protestant, apparently from conviction. He appears, in general, to have been honest and sincere in his opinions, and in his opposition to Christianity. The contents and arrangement of his work are the following: Man needs no outward positive revelation, but if such should be given him, it can contain nothing but what he has already in his own reason (an idea presented by Kant and Fichte in a different form). It can contain nothing but a moral system, whatever else it may communicate must be regarded merely as symbols. He maintained that God could not wish that men should ever be without religion, or possess only such as was inadequate. If, therefore, we will not charge God with injustice, we must admit that man has had, from the beginning, a religion sufficient for his purpose. The revelation, which is original and universal, consists in two truths: first, the existence of God; and second, that we are



created, not for God's sake but our own. This latter truth is adapted to fill us with gratitude to God, and lead us to follow his benevolent example (a bold conclusion). If it be asked how we are to attain the happiness which God has led us to desire? I answer, that the happiness of every being consists in its perfection—man is perfect when he lives according to the dictates of reason. If a revelation be communicated, it is impossible that it should demand more than this, since it would be unreasonable and cruel in God to demand more than was requisite to our perfection. If, then, we admit that there is a law written upon the heart of man worthy of confidence, we must either acknowledge that nothing can be revealed not contained in this law, or maintain that God is mutable, and increasing in knowledge. Upon the same ground that the Christian regards the Gospel as the most perfect revelation, must the Deist regard the religion of reason, which men have always possessed, in the same light. But how can the Deist prove the existence of such a perfect law in the heart of man, when the whole ancient world is filled with superstition and idolatry, and when this religion of reason is to be found nowhere in existence? The Deist borrows all this from Christianity, and cheats his own soul in thus taking what in itself is meager and impotent, and leaving all from which it can derive life and power. If a revelation, asks Tindal, should contain new doctrines, how could we have any certainty of their truth? To be of use they must be ascertained as the two original truths mentioned above, but this is impossible when the revelation is external, made in a strange language admitting of so many different interpretations, and filled with obscurities. Besides these *à priori* principles, Tindal, in the latter part of his work, attacked Christianity more in detail. He endeavoured to show that the principal personages of the Bible, particularly those mentioned in the Old Testament, are unworthy of respect; that many of the doctrines and expressions of the Bible (for example, that God hardens the heart) lead to the grossest errors. This work was extensively circulated both in England and Germany, as it was at once logically and mildly written. There appeared a hundred and six refutations of it.

After all these works had been written and published, the tendency to Deism was deeply and widely spread among the people; in the church it could not be openly acknowledged, although it was secretly entertained. In Scotland, where the discipline was severe, preachers had in many places their private meetings for discussing deistical opinions. The orthodox theologians did not take the proper course in defending religion, and therefore only increased the evil. They either strongly insisted upon the church doctrines, and required a forced acceptance of them, or they endeavoured to effect a reconciliation by softening down the doctrines of the Bible, until little was left worth contending for. This was the case with Teller and Spalding. Lessing compared this class of theologians to a master of a house who kept railing at a

set of thieves, and yet threw out to them all his goods, which they had nothing to do but to carry away.

We have yet to mention one other opposer of Christianity nearer to our own times, a man distinguished for his talents, and interesting to us, as having given occasion to the philosophy of Kant. This is David Hume, equally celebrated as a historian and philosopher. He was first intended for the law : but devoted himself to philosophy and belles lettres. In 1763 he was secretary of the English legation in Paris. From 1769 he lived independently, and died in 1776. The most worthy of attention, in a theological view, of his writings, are his "Essays," in four volumes. Of these two particularly are deserving of remark, that on the Natural History of Religion, and that on Miracles. Besides these his "Dialogues on Natural Religion," which is, perhaps, the most able work ever written on the side of deism.

In his "Essay on the Natural History of Religion," the leading idea is that the foundation of all religion must be sought in man himself, and that the result of a careful examination of the subject is, that the essence of religion consists in the admission of God and morality. On these points all nations are agreed, but in respect to the attributes of God and other doctrines, they differ. In the Essay on Miracles he presents the following views, which were afterwards widely adopted in Germany. "All faith," he says, "rests upon experience or testimony. The former of these is far surer than the latter, especially when one contradicts the other. With respect to the miracles of the New Testament, the case is thus: certain persons assert that about eighteen centuries ago these miracles occurred. It may be admitted that nothing can be urged against the credibility of these witnesses. But my own experience gives me no knowledge of the existence of miracles. I see cause and effect so connected, that within the range of my experience no miracles have occurred, and the experience of 4000 years teaches me the same. It is impossible, therefore, that the testimony of these good people can stand against my experience and that of 4000 years." We remark merely on the form of this argument. That miracles do not occur every day and come under the experience of every man, lies in the very idea of a miracle, for in the biblical sense, they are events which only occur when God has a particular purpose to answer for the benefit of men. Hence no one can demand that miracles should constantly take place. In regard to the experience of 4000 years, it is no way opposed to admission of miracles, for in this period multitudes have testified to their occurrence. The only question is, whether the testimony of such persons is historically true. In this objection of Hume, however, there is some truth; that is, that the mind cannot by the testimony of any number of credible witnesses, be absolutely necessitated to believe that a miracle has actually occurred. A certain disposition or state of feeling is necessary to lead us to place our faith in such testimony. But this is not only true in re-

lation to historical testimony in favour of miracles, but to all historical testimony, and even in reference to our own experience of external events. For if we had the positive testimony of our senses, in favour of a supernatural event, and yet had no disposition to believe it, it would fail to command our faith. Hence Voltaire declares, that if in clear daylight in the view of thousands, and in his own sight, a miracle should occur, he would still be more inclined to doubt the soundness of his senses, than to admit its reality. When the state of the mind is once fixed it cannot be changed by such external occurrences. Hence, in the scriptures, faith is represented as a virtue. The most important work of Hume, is his "Dialogues on Natural Religion;" they contain many remarks which later Deists have overlooked. His object is to controvert all those who profess to be able, by argument, to establish any religious doctrine whatever—Deists as well as Christians. Under the deistical dogmatists he understood, those who maintained that the principles of Natural Religion were susceptible of proof. Under the Christian, those who founded their doctrines upon a sense of guilt and the longing after divine communication implanted in our nature. He endeavoured to show, that neither could defend their principles. His conclusion is, that all doctrines on divine things are doubtful; the divine existence may indeed be admitted, but we cannot show how far it is analogous to our own. Providence and immortality can neither be proved nor believed. (What remains of the idea of God after this, is empty; and it is indifferent on these principles whether there be a God or not.) Against the deistical dogmatists he objected, that they argued from the order and arrangement of the world for an intelligent author. A conclusion from effect to cause is just. But in arguments of this kind, when we draw the conclusion of the existence of similar causes, the effects must be similar. But in the comparison of the world with a piece of human mechanism, the difference of the things compared is immense. When we dive into the depths of nature we find so much that is wonderful and unaccountable, that we can no longer compare the world with anything which is the result of human art. The difference is so great, that we should be led to conclude, that the world owed its existence to an author entirely different from the author of any piece of human ingenuity. It may be admitted that the work of God, as to quantity, may be compared to that of man, but not as to quality. In the world we find no dead mechanism, but an ever-living, creating power—so that a man deeply initiated into the mysteries of nature, must admit that the world is more like a plant or an animal, than a watch or a loom. If this be true, and we argue for like causes from like effects, we should arrive at the conclusion that the author of the world is an infinite vegetative power. If it be said that this gives no explanation of the intelligence and design manifested by this productive power, it may be answered that when you demand of me, whence from all eternity the intelligence of this productive power is derived, I can



demand of you whence comes from eternity the intelligence of God as a personal being. It is more natural to rest satisfied with the first conclusion, and admit the intelligence of the world, than to assume the existence of a personal being. In this way Hume showed that speculation, instead of leading to Theism, leads to Pantheism.

Against the believing theologian who takes part in the dialogue, and who rejoices over the refutation of the deist, Hume says, you see that on the ground of speculation deism is utterly incapable of proof, but maintains that a sense of our miseries must lead us to admit a divine revelation. Here the Deist denies the greatness of human misery, and endeavours in his way to disprove the necessity of a revelation. But Hume admits that the amount of human misery is indeed immense. Think of the outward afflictions of poverty, sickness, and misfortunes of every kind. Of the inward sorrows of grief, care, and remorse. Think not only of the miseries of man, but of the destruction carried on in the animal and vegetable world. We see everywhere, a war of all against all. If we suppose a heavenly Being alighted on our world, shown our prisons filled with criminals, hospitals crowded with sick, fields of battle strewn with slain, the sea covered with wrecks, whole regions wasted by disease and famine, who should demand where was all our boasted happiness, and we should show him our societies, theatres, masquerades, &c., would he not mournfully smile, and say we were only showing him the other side of our miseries. All this, says Hume, cannot be denied, but the difficulty is to reconcile all this with the belief in the existence of an Almighty and merciful God. If he be good and Almighty, what prevents his changing this miserable state of his creatures? Verily, he exclaims, the mechanism has much in its favour, and still more the opinion, that if there be a God, he has no perception of either good or evil. Even in this reasoning of Hume there is truth, in so far as that it is impossible to prove the mercy and love of God from the present state of the world, and it requires no little faith to retain, amidst all the sorrows and trials of the present life, our confidence in a benevolent Providence. It is on this account that faith is represented in the scriptures as something so great, and noble, and difficult; and he who has gone through the mazes of speculation will learn to estimate its excellence.

#### SECTION V.—*Infidelity in France.*

It is exceedingly interesting to remark, how the diversity of national character has modified the various systems of Infidelity. The Englishman is in his whole disposition practical; with this disposition is connected a desire of certainty and a high appreciation of what is morally good. Hence we remark among the English deists a desire to arrive at some fixed and stable truths, and an avoiding of useless speculations which lead to no solid results,

connected with a dread of consequences dangerous to morals. We observe, however, a deficiency in depth of speculation, which prevented their arriving at the result of all logical scepticism. The Germans have not the practical disposition of the English. In them feeling and speculation predominate over the will. Hence they seek less in their systems what is useful, not forming their theories to use them, or apply them to common life, but for the sake of having them. The German, as the Englishman, seeks for the truth, for something positive and sure, but this arises in the former not so much from a practical disposition, as the desire to have a well constructed theory. Infidelity in Germany, therefore, has always endeavoured to form itself into a system: and hence, whilst it has deviated more from what is morally and practically important, it has been more logical and consequent among the English: the Germans have carried both the truth and the falsehood further. Among the French we see much less a desire to arrive at any certain and positive results than among either of the other nations. They permitted themselves to be more influenced by transient circumstances; and were superficial or profound without stopping to consider the consequences. French infidelity never endeavoured to form a system which presented itself as truth. It was more desirous to destroy than to build up for itself. Most of the French Deists had indeed something of a materialistical system, but they did not always bring it forward, and seemed only intent upon destroying the public confidence in existing institutions and received doctrines. We shall therefore have little to say of French systems, but shall regulate our remarks according to the importance of the several works.

At the close of the 17th and commencement of the 18th centuries, many irreligious books had been brought into circulation, but these, on account of the strict censorship at that time exercised over the press in France, were generally printed in Holland. The most important work was "Bayle's Historical and Critical Dictionary." Bayle was an original thinker, as acute on philosophical as he was critical on historical subjects. He attacked the received doctrines of Christianity, and raised doubts upon many historical points, which, till then, had not been questioned upon the continent. His scepticism upon the more thinking class of the public produced considerable effect, so that many persons of distinction applied to Leibnitz to refute his objections. The first completely deistical work proceeded from a female, which is much more systematical than most that followed it. Mary Huber, who died in Lyons, in 1759, is the name of the author. In her early life she manifested a strong tendency to inward religion, and formed an acquaintance with the writings of the mystics. It was through their influence apparently, that she was led to an indifference respecting the doctrines of Christianity, and to make everything to turn on the question, whether the soul was in connection with God, and fulfilled his commands. The title of her work, which, although

not distinguished for acuteness, is more methodical than other French works of the kind, is, "*Letters diverses sur la Religion essentielle à l'homme, distingué de ce qui n'est qu'accessive.*" This lady also made herself remarkable by holding religious deistical meetings.

The men who had the most decisive and extensive influence in promoting deistical principles not only in France, but also in Germany and Russia, were Voltaire and Rousseau; two very different men; each having his distinct public upon which he operated to the injury of religion. Voltaire was born in 1694. He manifested, as early as his sixteenth year, by the publication of his *Œdipus*, his hatred against the hierarchy. In various other poetical and prose works he gave full play to his satire against the Catholic church, which naturally raised him a great many enemies. In 1725, in consequence of some private disputes, he left France and went over to England. Here he collected the weapons which he afterwards directed against Christianity, principally from the writings of Morgan and Tindal. In 1748, he went to the court of Stanislaus the deposed king of Poland, and in 1750 was invited to Berlin, by Frederick the Great. After his removal to Berlin, the admiration entertained for him throughout Europe became extravagantly great; as he was looked upon not merely as a writer of distinguished talents, but as the bosom friend of Frederick. His splendid course here, however, was soon ended. Through various instances of misconduct he ruined his character, and lost the confidence of his patron, who could no longer remain blind to his avarice and ambition. He got involved in controversy with Maupertuis, the president of the Berlin Society, whom he considered as his rival, and whom he endeavoured, by all manner of cabals, to displace. Neglecting the frequent commands of the king to put an end to these attempts, and publishing a scandalous satire against Maupertuis, which was burnt by the common hangman, he was compelled to leave the country. The circumstances connected with his departure were still more dishonourable. The king had entrusted him with many of his manuscripts which Voltaire carried off with him; probably with a view of selling them at an enormous price to some bookseller. He was, however, pursued and arrested at Frankfort. and not only forced to restore the manuscripts he had purloined, but deprived of the order by which he had been decorated by the king. After this he determined to settle in Geneva. Here he wished to introduce a company of players; but as the severe laws introduced by Calvin against theatres were still in force, he was unable to effect his purpose. To remain without a play-house was to him intolerable; he therefore removed to the little state of Gex, and purchased an estate, and gratified his pride by appearing as lord of the manor. He built a church here with the inscription "*Deo Voltaire.*" In his old age, he could not resist the impulse of his vanity, to present himself to the admiration of the public in Paris. His reception



was attended by every circumstance of the most extravagant flattery, and he seems literally to have lost his life through the quantity of incense burnt in his praise: a mode of adulation little suited to his weak nerves, and which is thought to have occasioned the illness of which he died in 1778. What Voltaire has written against religion can appear in its proper light only when viewed in connexion with his character. Very few authors have contrived so completely to tarnish their reputation. In Berlin he manifested the most inordinate ambition, which sought by every device to attain its object. Every one who was not a servile flatterer was in his eyes condemned. With this was connected the most insatiable avarice, which led to every form of dishonesty. He endeavoured, upon false representations of his poverty, to secure grants of money from the king; he sold his manuscripts over and over to booksellers, was involved in a lawsuit with some Jews, whom he attempted to defraud of a large sum. His licentiousness poisons all his writings, but is particularly manifested in his *Maid of Orleans*. He was, besides all this, a hypocrite; as soon as he was brought into any danger for his opinions, he professed implicit faith in all the doctrines of the Catholic church. He was accustomed to conclude all discussions on this subject with the expression, *As I confess my ignorance, I submit myself entirely to the holy church*. In Tournay he subscribed a Catholic confession of Faith, and afterwards published his "*Questions sur l'Encyclopédie*," in which the Christian religion is violently attacked. In such a character it is evident there could be no honest search after the truth. In regard to philosophy, he was a sceptic. In his work "*Sur le Philosophe Ignorant*," he declares himself doubtful of the truth of deism. Providence and immortality he denied; the soul is material, thought mechanical. He acknowledged a God, but one who had nothing to do with the world. He recommended the argument, *ab utili et a tuto*, saying, it could do no harm if any one chose to believe in a God, and it was, at least good for the police. His attacks on revelations are mere rhapsodies. He takes up a particular doctrine, a historical fact, a passage of scripture, or a portion of ecclesiastical history, and endeavours to present it in the most ridiculous light possible. He not only perverts facts, and makes false quotations, but brings forward passages as contained in the Bible, which are nowhere to be found in it. Having quoted a passage as from the Prophet Habakkuk, a pedantic German scholar once waited on him, and after many apologies for presuming to question the correctness of his quotation, said, he was obliged to confess that, notwithstanding all his diligence in searching the original and ancient versions, he was unable to find the passage referred to: Voltaire contented himself with the reply, "*Monsieur Abakuk est capable de tout*." Citing only the Vulgate, he is often led into mistakes, yet his worshippers received without questioning everything he said. The morality of Epictetus and Cicero, he maintains, is absolutement la

même with the Christian. He wrote against the Pentateuch without knowing what it was, for he speaks of *le livre de Moyse et Josua et la reste du Pentateuque*! Ninus and Belus, he maintains, could never have existed, as Asiatic names could never end in *us*! Messiah is a Hebrew word, which in Greek is expressed by "*κεκομενος*:" what he meant to say is not easy to divine. He often asserted that before the time of Theodosius no respectable heathen became a Christian. He maintained also, that the fabulous Jewish book, *Toldoth Jeshu*, was an authentic source of information respecting Christ and his apostles. His principal writings directed against religion, are his *Candide*, *L'Evangile de Jour*, and *Les Questions sur l'Encyclopédie*. The first is a Romance, which contains the history of a man driven about by all manner of misfortunes, and in which the author endeavours to show that the sources of consolation commonly applied to in affliction are vain and ridiculous. The object of the work is to ridicule the doctrine of a Providence. The writings of Voltaire have been spread even to Siberia, where, it is said, they are still much read by persons of property. The Governor of Siberia replied to some one, who urged him to take these books out of the hands of the people, that "to us it is not commanded to root out the tares, but to sow the wheat."

Jean Jacques Rousseau was born in Geneva, 1712. After a disturbed and unsettled life he died in 1778. Rousseau had as little of system in his infidelity as Voltaire. In the latter, scepticism was the result of vanity and frivolity; in the former, of a morbid sensibility, which through vanity degenerated into mere caprice. The leading features of his character were sentimentality and capricious vanity. The former was deeply seated in his nature, and the circumstances in which he was thrown served to increase it. His education was effeminate, and his youth devoted to reading novels. A particular circumstance excited in him a love of paradox which fed his vanity. The academy of Dijon proposed the question, whether science and civilisation were serviceable to morality and human happiness. Rousseau, who determined to write on the question, first intended to give an affirmative answer, but a friend suggesting that he could never distinguish himself by such an every day reply, decided him to take the opposite side. This paradoxical turn his vanity led him to retain, and prompted him to advance new and peculiar views both in religion and politics. In the latter he became an advocate for liberty and equality, and in his work "*Sur le Contrat Social*," published the doctrine that the authority of rulers rests only upon the consent of the people. In religion this bent of mind should have led him to come out as the decided enemy of all positive doctrines, but here his sensibility stood in his way, and he felt so much what was elevated in Christianity, that he declared, such was the power and sublimity of the scriptures, that God only could be their author. But, on the other hand, while he allowed that the feelings led to such a

conclusion, he maintained that the understanding could not admit a revelation ; and that there were so many contradictions, so much that was incredible in the Bible, as to render the idea that they had been immediately communicated from God inadmissible. He called his, therefore, an involuntary scepticism. Yet in general he speaks with great reverence of the Bible and of Christ, extolling particularly his mildness and humility. Even if any one, he said, could live and die as Christ did, he could not do it with the same humility. He instituted a comparison between Christ and Leonidas, Epaminondas and Socrates, and adds that if Socrates lived and died like a wise man, Christ lived and died like a God. He maintained that in every religion, we could only admit for truth what had in its favour the testimony of our own hearts. In his "*Lettres de la Montagne*," he denied that miracles could be advanced as a proof of Christianity, and says, that Christ himself appealed to his doctrines and not to his miracles, in support of his claims. His principal work is the one on Education, four vols. In this work a confession of faith is put into the mouth of a vicar, which expresses Rousseau's own views. His influence was equally injurious with that of Voltaire. The vulgarity of the latter could not affect persons of feeling and worth, but the influence of Rousseau extended over those who had some regard for religion and morality. He presented his doubts in a way which was best adapted to give them effect on such individuals ; constantly professing his willingness to believe if the difficulties could only be taken out of the way. The source of Rousseau's infidelity is clearly to be learned from his character, as he has himself drawn it in his Confessions. It is plain that vanity and pride were so predominant in him, that his better feelings could exert but little influence. It is useful to compare the Confessions of Rousseau with those of Augustin, as the one teaches us the state of mind which is suited to the discovery of the truth, and the other that which is inconsistent with its perception.

The writings of these two men had so filled France with infidelity, that even during their lives numerous authors appeared who went further than their masters. It became the fashion in the higher circles to ridicule religion, and it was considered a mark of *bon ton* to laugh at the priests as blockheads and deceivers ; and, unfortunately, everything found objectionable in the Catholic system was referred to Christianity itself. The infidel party soon felt themselves strong enough to attempt to operate upon a larger scale. This was undertaken in a work designed to throw light upon every department of knowledge—the "*Encyclopédie Universelle, ou Dictionnaire Universelle des Sciences, des Arts, et des Metiers*;" an edition of 2000 copies of this was greedily bought up in a single year. The editors were D'Alembert and Diderot ; both atheistical sceptics. The former seemed rather inclined to conceal his atheism, and said he merely wished to ascertain the truth and present a fair view of both sides of the



question. But the arguments for the truth were stated in the weakest manner possible, those against it in the strongest. Diderot was more open. In his "*Pensées Philosophiques*," he endeavoured to show, that belief in God's existence was not only feebly supported, but altogether unnecessary, and that it was better not to trouble ourselves about it. He said the same respecting the immortality of the soul, and even of moral truths. The influence of this man was very considerable; and when called to the court of Catherine II. of Russia, he succeeded in poisoning the higher ranks of society with his opinions. He was active in making proselytes, endeavouring to convince those around him how unhappy the belief in God made man, by keeping him in constant fear of his justice. He did not fully present his system, but materialism lay at its foundation.

Many other works appeared in this period which spoke out without the least reserve. Julian de la Mettrie, a physician, who spent the latter part of his life as wit in the court of Frederick II., was one of those who were the most gross in his materialism. See his "*L'Homme Machine*," and "*Traites de la Vie Heureuse*." In the latter (Amsterdam edition, vol. i., p. 46), he says, "*L'univers ne sera jamais heureux à moins qu'il ne soit athée*:"—but if atheism could be once fully propagated, religion would be destroyed root and branch; nature then inoculated as with a holy principle, would maintain its rights and its purity. Deaf to every other voice, the peaceful mortal would follow no other rule than the dictates of his own nature. This man died as he had lived; like a brute; he killed himself by eating immoderately of a preparation of mushrooms. Frederick II., who had so honoured him when alive, had a very sarcastic epitaph inscribed upon his tomb. The influence of these and other works of a similar character, was to produce throughout France, not only an indifference to religion, but also to morality. The poison descended from the higher to the lower classes, and its progress was far more rapid than in Germany. The result and the acme of these doctrines are presented in the French Revolution. The rapid progress of infidelity at this period is not, however, to be exclusively attributed to the influence of these writings. Many other causes combined to produce this effect; one of the most important of these was the general immorality which prevailed at the court of Louis XV., and the priesthood endeavouring to uphold religion by mere external means. The political state of France also was such; there were so many impositions and irregularities, that the people became far more interested in politics than in religion. Even before decided hostility was declared against religion, the services of the church had sunk into general contempt. The open war against all that is holy commenced in 1793. Christianity was then even in externals disregarded, the Sabbath was abolished, marriage and baptism, as merely civil affairs, were brought under the cognizance of the magistrates. The storm broke out, particularly in the month of November, when the government de-

terminated to plunder the churches to replenish the exhausted resources of the state. This step was in many places hailed with the greatest applause. At this time many of the clergy came forward, and solemnly renounced at once religion and their offices. The Bishop of Paris, Gobet, appeared before the bar of the national convention, with the clergy of his diocese, and made the following declaration: "I have, as long as I possessed any influence, used it to promote the love of liberty and equality. The revolution is approaching its conclusion with rapid strides; nothing can now exist but liberty and equality. May my example serve to confirm the authority of these two goddesses. Long live liberty and equality!"

The president of the convention replied, "The confession, citizen, which you have made, proves that philosophy has made the greatest advances. It is the more worthy of praise as you are the Bishop of the capital, as thus Paris has the triumph of being the first proclaimer of reason." He then saluted him with the kiss of brotherhood, and presented him the Jacobin cap. Julien, a Protestant minister from Toulouse, then rose and said, "How glorious is it to make such a declaration under the auspices of reason, philosophy, and the constitution! I have, for twenty years, been clothed with the office of a Protestant minister; but I now declare that I will no longer retain it. Henceforth, the laws shall be my temple—liberty my God—my country my worship—the constitution my Gospel." Amidst this despicable insanity, it is delightful to hear the voice of truth, which was yet strong and bold enough to make itself heard. Gregoire, Bishop of Blois, arose in his place and spoke with much effect, until he was forcibly driven from the tribune. "I rise," he said, "because I had a very indistinct idea of what had happened before my arrival. I hear men speak of sacrifices for the country; to these I am accustomed. Of proofs of devotion to the country; these have I given. Is the question of income? I resign it to you. Is the question of religion? That is beyond your power. I hear much about fanaticism and superstition; these have I ever opposed. But if the words be explained, it will be seen that religion itself is intended. As for me, I have received my office neither from you nor from the people: I consented to bear the burden of a bishoprick, I was urged to accept it, and now I am urged to lay it aside:—but I bid you defiance; I will remain a bishop and scatter blessings around me." The tumult became so great that he was obliged to desist; and, although he appealed to the liberty of worship which had been established, he was hurled from the tribune, but was happy enough to escape the fury of the mob. The conduct of the capital was a signal for the provinces; congratulations were received from all quarters, from clergymen, who hastened to resign their offices, and pray to be regarded as citizens, and taken into political employment. Something was now to be placed in the room of discarded Christianity; and the convention determined to establish the worship of Reason. A

representative of Reason was accordingly selected (her character may be easily imagined)—the cap of liberty was placed upon her head, a blue mantle was thrown over her shoulder, and her arm rested upon a spear. Thus arrayed, she was introduced, amidst the shouts of the people, into the hall of the convention, and placed opposite the president, who addressed her in the following terms: "Fanaticism is at last departed, and has left its place to reason, justice, and truth. The feeble eyes of superstition could no longer endure the light of the present illumination. We have brought to-day an offering into the temple of reason, not to a soulless idol, but to a woman, who is a master-piece of nature. This holy image has inflamed all our hearts; but one wish, but one prayer, is now heard; no longer any priest, and no longer any other Gods than those which nature gives us." After this, the goddess was placed upon the seat of the president, and received from the secretary the usual salutation, amidst the shouts of the Jacobins. The crowd thence proceeded to the church of St. Denis, which was desecrated with songs to liberty and nature. The church received the name of "Temple de la Raison." The rage against religion became now more open and furious; the clergy were forced to give up their offices; and if they refused, were sent out of the country. The inscription "Temple de la Raison" was affixed to the churches, and "La mort est un sommeil éternel" to the cemeteries in various places throughout the country. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that many Christians in Germany should think that this was the predicted period of Antichrist; for in no period of history was the insane opposition to religion carried to such extravagant lengths. From this time one enormity and murderous outrage followed another, until the bloody Robespierre stepped forward as the advocate of religion. In the beginning of the year 1794 he proposed to the convention to acknowledge a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul; and to appoint festivals in honour of this Being. The convention agreed to the proposition, and made the proclamation, "Le peuple Français reconnoît des aujourd'hui un être suprême et l'immortalité de l'âme;" which was posted upon the churches. Thirty-six festivals were appointed, which were little else than days devoted to amusement. Among these were the following: the festival of the Supreme Being—of rights and of nature—of the human race—of the hatred of tyrants, &c. On the first celebration of the first mentioned festival, which occurred in the spring, Robespierre delivered an inflated discourse in honour of the Supreme Being, and a hymn was sung, in which the following passage occurs: "To thee, from whom the free Frenchman has derived his existence, does he lift up his voice, proud, if he must obey a king, to have thee for a sovereign." It is the common opinion that this despot acted the part of a hypocrite in all this business, merely to gain credit with those who still retained some little regard for religion. But it is more probable that he acted from a species of conviction, and had some feeling on the subject. It is



possible that he wished in this way to quiet his conscience, which must constantly have upbraided him for the multitude of his bloody crimes; and it is known that in the latter part of his life he was tormented by remorse, until his ignominious execution closed his career. This deistical worship obtained no consistency, the festivals were merely a kind of theatrical exhibitions. In 1797 the Catholic religion was again introduced, on the condition that the priests should be dependent on the state, and not on the pope. Many, however, who had imbibed the principles of Rousseau, and had some regard for religion, were unfavourable to the restoration of the Catholic worship. They formed themselves, therefore, into a distinct society, and assumed the name Theophilanthropists. Their main principles were, love to God and man, and belief in the immortality of the soul. The directory favoured their object, in order to have something to oppose the Catholics. Their religious service consisted in moral discourses—singing hymns, mostly borrowed from the Psalms; and certain symbolical ceremonies, such as crowning with wreaths of flowers, presenting fruit on wooden dishes, &c. In 1798 they had ten churches in their possession, and in most of the cities of the provinces there were societies formed after the model of that existing in Paris. In 1799 the society was in the most flourishing state, but the people found the service so dry and uninteresting that in 1802 it was almost dissolved. The consuls took from them their church, and they soon entirely disappeared. The deistical worship established in London, by Williams, shared a similar fate. Frederick II. discovered his penetration, when he replied to the Marquis d'Argenson, who wished to establish a worship of the same kind in Potsdam, "that he must take subscriptions for ten years." The Catholic religion regained its ascendancy: Bonaparte concluded a concordat with the Pope; and this fanaticism of infidelity passed away as a meteor. The seeds of infidelity doubtless still remain; but many of the greatest zealots against religion, as it is proved by decisive examples, were really converted. Of this number was Julien, the Protestant minister who publicly renounced religion, but, before his death, he returned to the faith of the Bible.

#### SECTION VI.—*History of Infidelity in Germany.*

THE character of infidelity in Germany, and the manner of its development, is, in a three-fold respect, different from that which it assumed in other countries. In the first place, it was much more consequent; and hence, the German infidels proceeded more and more to Pantheism, which is the logical result of sceptical speculation.

2. It displayed itself more gradually, and advanced more orderly, step by step, and hence took a deeper hold on the very life of the people. In no country has infidelity pervaded every department of society, as in some portions of Germany.

3. In other lands the clergy stood as watchmen and guardians

against the attacks of scepticism; as was the case particularly in Protestant England, where the clergy were found faithful to their trust. But Germany saw, what never had been seen before, that those who were appointed to teach and defend the truths of revelation, should step forward to oppose them. On the same grounds, and, in part, with the same tendency, as Lucian and Celsus, from among the heathen, attacked Christianity, did many of the German theologians array themselves against the religion of which they were the servants. Most of this class sought, through a regular analysis of the general truths, or ideas of religion, by scientific investigation, to prove the falsity of the doctrines of the Bible. It is clear, that in proportion as this disposition prevailed among the clergy, must infidelity extend and deepen itself in the hearts of the people. Various circumstances conspired to favour the spread of this sceptical spirit among the German theologians. Of this nature we may notice the following as among the most important:

1. Many circumstances connected with the reign of Frederick II.; as the residence of so many gay despisers of religion at his court, who extended their influence over most persons of rank in the country; the great liberty of opinion which Frederick admitted, to an extent which had never before been allowed.

2. The extended admiration of French literature, which produced at this period little else than works ridiculing religion. For even those which did not expressly treat of the subject, yet had a tincture of the reigning spirit. We must mention also the love of the English literature, particularly at the close of the last century. Most of the freethinking works were translated into German; and although the refutations of these works were also translated, as translating was the order of the day, yet, as the Chancellor Pfaff, of Tübingen, remarked, "these refutations were not of such value as to compensate for the evil."

3. The influence of a literary periodical work, established in Berlin, conducted by Nicolai, which systematically recommended all works written in opposition to religion, and neglected or condemned those in its favour. This work was commenced in 1765, and increased to 118 volumes. The influence of this work was far greater than any such review could have at present.

4. The influence of the philosophy of Wolf, out of which the Popular Philosophy arose. Wolf's philosophy contained a principle which operated fatally, not only against revelation, but against inward piety. It pretended to be able to demonstrate the truths of revelation in a mathematical manner upon principles of reason, which subjected these truths to the spirit of speculation. It made also the broadest distinction between natural and revealed religion. It did not indeed deny the latter, but it accustomed the people to consider them as different; and as the truths of natural religion were represented as so firmly grounded, many were induced to embrace them as sufficient. It operated also against Christianity, by its cold syllogistical method of reasoning, which tended to de-

stroy everything that was vital, not merely the religion of the heart, but every finer feeling which was not satisfied with dull abstract forms. It was from this system, as before remarked, the Popular Philosophy arose, which undertook to prove, on the principles of Reason, the truths of Natural Religion. Without resting satisfied with the views proposed by Wolf, it turns them all to its advantage. To this school belong Jerusalem, Garve, Reimar, Eberhardt, Moses Mendelssohn, &c. The worst thing about this system was that it laid claim to the name of philosophy, when it was, in fact, nothing more than a set of arbitrary opinions. Its defenders, who were but weak thinkers, stood in breathless amazement when Kant and others appeared upon the field. Thus Jacobi, in his latter years, said, when the works of Hegel appeared, that he had been able to understand all other philosophical works, but these were too abstruse for him: and Mendelssohn could not understand Jacobi, nor Garve, Mendelssohn.

The opposition among the theologians to the truths of revelation was at first by no means decided; as a first step we must regard the influence of some theological writers who were not themselves enemies of these truths, but prepared the way for their rejection, and, without intending it, forged weapons for those who should come after them. The occasion of this lay in the degraded state of theology in the beginning of the 18th century. Such men as Calvin, Melancthon, Chytraeus and many others, were profoundly learned, and knew how to employ their learning in the service of theology without weakening their faith in the doctrines of the Bible: their erudition enlarged their views without injuring either their faith or piety. But the situation of theology, especially in the Lutheran church, at the period referred to, was exceedingly low; it consisted in little more than establishing and illustrating the doctrines of the church; all the main ideas in the several departments rested upon tradition; the study of theology was a work of memory; few giving themselves the trouble to examine how far the doctrines they had received from their fathers agreed with the sacred scriptures. Learning, properly speaking, was not wanting, for such men as Calov and Carpzov among the orthodox, and Rambach and Buddeus among the Pietists, may be compared with any of the learned men of the present day, and even excelled them; it was not learning, therefore, but a scientific spirit that was wanting. The situation of profane literature was much the same, for here also was wanting an independent self-formed character: what was received was transmitted. But about the middle of the preceding century, a new spirit was introduced into this department. In philosophy, Wolf and his disciples excited a new and lively interest, which rapidly spread itself over Germany, and at the same time introduced an entirely different method of treating the subject. In history a new era was formed by Thomasius, and the various translations of English historical works increased the interest which he had excited. In philology a new school was



formed by Ernesti, Reiske and others, who adopted a method much superior to that pursued by the philologists of Holland. As all these departments are more or less connected with theology, it could not fail that the impulse should be communicated to it. Several distinguished men appeared at this period, as Baumgarten in Halle, Ernesti in Leipzig, and John David Michaelis in Gottingen, who pursued with ardour the study of profane literature, and endeavoured to effect a connexion between this literature and theology, and to enrich the latter with the results of the former, and this was the first step to neology.

It is an interesting and important question, whether this connexion of profane literature with theology has a necessary tendency to neology. That in the Lutheran church it obviously had this tendency, cannot be denied. And something of the same kind may be seen in the Reformed Church, especially among the Arminians. But, on the other hand, history shows that this is not necessarily the case. Calvin, Melancthon, Chytræus, and Bucerus were profoundly versed in these studies, without manifesting the least tendency to infidelity. Hence it appears that it depends upon the manner of treating the subject, and the way in which profane and sacred literature are united. There is in theology a two-fold element, the one human, the other supernatural; by the one it is connected with every department of human knowledge, and hence an accurate acquaintance with human science must have a salutary influence upon the study of theology. On the other hand, there is something supernatural, which is to be found in no human science; and which no human science can either explain or illustrate. If, therefore, the theologian does not know this, by his own living experience; if he be not connected by faith with the invisible world, with him the study of profane literature and its connexion with theology must prove injurious. If a theologian be without faith and without profane literature, as was the case with many of the orthodox party in the Lutheran church, he will deliver Christianity to his successors as he found it, without understanding it himself but a means of blessing to those who did, as actually occurred among the orthodox. But were he better acquainted with profane literature, he would be led, while he retained the earthly part of theology, to endeavour to explain what was supernatural by his profane science; placing human and profane ideas in the place of the divine, and thus his knowledge would prove destructive. This remark is particularly illustrated by the history of Semler. Those, therefore, who, in the period of which we speak, first connected the study of profane literature with theology, and introduced a scientific spirit into this department, although not avowed enemies to what was supernatural in Christianity, yet knew it not in its depths, and thus worked without intending it, to remove the very essence of the system.

Baumgarten in Halle, who died in 1757, was the first who raised a third party in the Lutheran church. He was sincerely subject

to the truths of Christianity, but inordinate in his love of human learning, which produced an injurious effect upon his theological views. He operated upon his students and his contemporaries in giving a new tendency to their minds, partly by the introduction of various English theological works, which were of a superficial character, and were more or less deistical. He also introduced many English historical works, especially the "Universal History," by Guthrie and Gray, which excited a desire for the study of profane literature among the theologians of Halle, and partly also by adopting the logical demonstrative method of Wolf, insisting upon the most accurate division and subdivision of every subject; a method which he did not confine to the dogmatic, but applied also to exegesis. He exhorted his students to throw off the trammels of tradition and apply their own understandings. Connected with this, however, he chilled their hearts, and softened down the genuine Christian doctrines. It is indeed impossible to present these doctrines in such strict logical forms; divine things are in themselves simple, but they cannot by speculation and subtle logic be placed in the light, and every effort to express these peculiar ideas in precise forms stifles their spirit. Many of the students of Baumgarten were led by his method to a cold, intellectual, but lost the inward, knowledge.

The influence of John August Ernesti was far more extensive. He was made professor of Leipzig in 1759. Ernesti was a man of profound and extensive learning; he retained his faith in the divine truths, and was very cautious in all his undertakings. He had already made himself so extensively known by his philological works, that those which he published upon theology excited the greater attention, and students flocked from all quarters to attend his lectures. His principal object was to make his philosophical knowledge useful in exegesis, and he applied the same rules to the interpretation of the sacred scriptures which he had applied to the classics. His most important work is his "Institutio Interpretis Novi Testamenti;" the shortest and most useful compend of Hermeneutics. Before the time of Ernesti, the department of sacred philology had long lain fallow. He was joined in these labours by his colleague, Professor Fischer, who, however, went much further. Fischer was the first to apply the new philology to the Lexicography of the New Testament, in his work, "De Vitiis Lexicorum Nov. Testam." It was already clearly manifested in these works, particularly those of Fischer, how much evil results from the unenlightened connexion of profane literature with theology. The peculiar Christian ideas were brought more or less to the standard of mere deistical notions; thus ἀναλεννησις was made to mean, *emendatio per Religionem Christianam*, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was reduced to the notion of praiseworthy qualities, obtained by divine assistance. It is easy to see how these ideas lead to neology. Regeneration was with many, merely a reception into a religious community. The phrase "are one," (as used by

Christ in reference to himself and the Father) was explained of a unity of feeling and will.

John David Michaelis, who was the third learned man to whom reference has been made, was appointed Professor in Gottingen in 1745, and died in 1791. He was the son of the excellent J. P. Michaelis, of Halle, where he was educated in the society of the pious professors of the University. But (to use his own words) he was too light-minded to give himself up to the pietistical spirit which then reigned in Halle. In Gottingen he freed himself from his early trammels both in respect to doctrine and practice. The principal objects of his attention were, profane history, geography, antiquities, and the oriental languages. He seems not to have had so much religion as Baumgarten or Ernesti, and therefore his manner of treating theology was much more injurious. He did not, indeed, deny any essential doctrines, but softened them down, made what was internal merely external, much to the detriment of what constitutes the essence of Christianity. Thus to make the opposition between *πνευμα* and *σαρξ* nothing more than the opposition between reason and sensuality, must necessarily be destructive in its operation, for if this be all, the Christian religion does not differ from the philosophy of Plato. The grounds also upon which he rested the authority of Christianity were superficial; he said that were it not for the miracles and prophecies he would not believe in the scriptures, and that he had often read the Bible, but never found the testimonium spiritus sancti. In his writings we remark a great want of delicacy, which was still more observable in lectures which were sometimes disgraced by downright obscenities. The influence and mode of operation of these three men may be best learnt from the following works: that of Baumgarten, from the autobiography of Semler; that of Ernesti (and also Fischer) from the autobiography of Bahrdt; that of Michaelis from his own life, and the autobiography of John von Müller, who speaks of the exceedingly improper manner of his lecturing.

Until this period the basis of Christianity had not been attacked, the main doctrines yet stood firm, although doubts had been here and there excited. The method of treating these subjects was very arbitrary; the manner in which the church had presented the leading doctrines was laid aside; many of the passages before relied upon in their support were rejected, and the manner of proving them was changed; the arguments being drawn from general deistical principles or profane literature. The most important practical doctrines also were so much explained away, as to lose their nature. The students of these men came out in a spirit essentially different from that of their teachers. Semler was the pupil of Baumgarten, Morus of Ernesti, Koppe and Eichhorn of Michaelis, and by them neology was established. Among these founders of neology, the most important, and its real author, is Semler, an original thinker, which is what we rarely meet with among the neologists. Semler had been brought up in Halle in contact with vital



piety, where he received impressions, which he could never entirely obliterate, and which in his old age revived. Possessed of a very sanguine temperament, and, as he complains himself, light-minded, he renounced entirely the party of the Pietists, who, it must be admitted, were deficient in learning, and defective in the manner in which they defended their doctrines; and connected himself with Baumgarten. It was not the personal character of Baumgarten, which was dry and logical, which formed the attraction for Semler, but his great learning and his fine library to which he gave his friend free access. Semler, under these circumstances, acquired extensive erudition, and as his master had freed himself from the form at least in which the church presented the Christian doctrines, Semler went further and adopted opinions entirely new. Baumgarten, perceiving the creative talents of this sanguine man, said to him: "Theology stands in need of a new reformation, I am too old to undertake the business; this you must do," and this he did. Semler was first Professor of History in Altdorf, and was thence called as professor of theology to Halle in 1752. With regard to the powers of his mind, it may be said, that they were on the one hand very great, and on the other, very deficient. He had an astonishing memory, and was able at any time to recall what he had ever learnt. His mind was also acute, when the field of investigation was small, and his imagination active and vivid, which led him easily to form new combinations. But he was deficient in all the qualifications of a philosopher, as well dialectical as contemplative, and hence he never formed any system, although he produced a multitude of new thoughts which he neither expanded nor arranged, but cast them out in the greatest disorder. His works are on this account very difficult to read, there is no connexion in the ideas and no logical arrangement. He retained, in all his investigations, the fear of God, which, joined with his want of a philosophical spirit, prevented him from seeing whither the principles he adopted naturally led; and when he saw in others the consequences of the course upon which he had entered, he sincerely repented that he had gone so far. This led to the firm opposition which he made to Bahrddt, whose conduct gave him real distress. In his latter days, Semler wished to remedy the evils he had occasioned, and published some very singular views by which he endeavoured to reconcile scepticism and adherence to the doctrines of the church. He said there was a public and private religion for the theologian; in public he was not authorized to reject any received doctrine, but in private he might believe what he pleased. And when the preacher spoke of the "Son of God," it was no harm if one part of his audience regarded him as really God, another as merely a man, and the third entertained the Arian doctrine, all this was consistent with unity. The revolution which Semler produced, was principally by his exegesis. Ernesti had recommended the principle that the language and history of the particular period, in which the several

sacred books were written, should be applied to their explication. This principle is unquestionably correct, but improperly applied leads to decided neology. Semler acted upon this principle, and was for explaining everything from the circumstances of that age, and reducing the general notions of the Bible to more precise ideas. In this way the leading doctrines of the scriptures were brought down to mere temporary ideas; and the spirit of the Bible, which should ever attend and give it life, was lost, and it became a book for the age in which it was written. *Σαρξ* and *πνευμα* he explained from the peculiar opinions of that period; *σαρξ* was the narrow notion of the Jews respecting Christianity, against which Paul wrote and contended; *πνευμα* was a free and liberal idea of Christianity.

On this principle he divided the books of the New Testament into those in which the *σαρξ* predominated, and those in which the *πνευμα* prevailed. The Gospels were written for the *σαρκικοί*; Paul's Epistles for the *γνωστικοί*; the Catholic Epistles, too, united both parties, and the Apocalypse for the Fanatics. In this way he must necessarily lose the proper view of the Bible. In the Epistle to the Romans he overlooked what is the main point in the whole discussion, justification by grace, in opposition to that by works; according to him, Paul's object was to combat the narrow views of the Jews, who believed that they alone could be saved; whereas, Paul wished to extend salvation to the heathen as well as the Jews. It is plain that if these principles of Semler, when applied to the New Testament, were so injurious, they must be much more so when applied to the Old. If the Old Testament is to be explained according to the views entertained of it in the age in which it was written, then it must lose its important meaning. Semler did not hesitate to say, therefore, that it was useless for Christians: that Jesus laid stress upon it merely because the Jews thought that they had eternal life therein; but Paul has directly attacked it. Only such parts which, on account of their moral excellence, were still valuable, could be of any use to Christians of the present day. Semler was thus brought by his historical criticism to precisely the same results as the Popular Philosophy. Semler was particularly learned in the patristical and ecclesiastical history; and most of his writings refer to these departments. His scepticism and want of religious experience are here also clearly displayed. In the history of the Christian doctrines, he could not distinguish the true from the false; and thought everything was full of contradictions, because he was not able to see the ground of coincidence. His want of religious feeling led him also to condemn Augustin and justify Pelagius, and his view on this subject became every day more general.

There arose a man by the side of Semler, in Halle, who not only united the various scattered neological doubts which he had cast out, but connected with them many of his own arbitrary yet destructive doctrines. A man who attacked not only the doctrines

of the church, but those of the Bible, and whose life was as injurious as his writings. This was the famous Dr. Bahr<sup>dt</sup>. His father, a professor of theology at Leipzig, was a strictly orthodox man. The son manifested from the first, a great degree of light-mindedness, which his father did not properly attempt to correct. He rather sought to conceal, than eradicate the faults of his son. His education, therefore, produced a very bad effect upon his mind; observing on the one hand such strict orthodox principles, and on the other such a laxity of practice, he got the idea that orthodoxy was altogether an affair of the head, and that the heart was governed by entirely different principles. He was early Privat Docent and preacher in Leipzig; but his gross misconduct and licentiousness forced him to resign his office to avoid deposition. He retired to Erfur<sup>dt</sup>, where he was made professor, and continued his abandoned mode of life; thence he removed to Giessen, and from thence to Maschlitz, to an institution of Herr von Salis. Thence he went to Türkheim, in the territory of the Count of Leiningen, where he was made General Superintendent. It was here he published his New Testament, under the title, "Newest Revelation of God," 1779. In his translation he endeavoured to give a new-fashioned dress to everything, and introduced all the personages speaking and acting, as though they had been Saxons or Prussians living in the year 1779. In his interpretations, whatever was most perverse and unnatural, was sure to be adopted as true. This book produced such a sensation that an imperial order was issued from Vienna condemning the work, and urging that the author should be displaced. The Count of Leiningen consented, and Bahr<sup>dt</sup> was obliged to remove. He went now to the land of illumination, to Prussia, and applied to the minister, Von Zedlitz, for employment, who was very willing to secure him a situation. Bahr<sup>dt</sup> came to Halle, and would probably have been made a professor, had not the faculty objected. Semler was particularly active in this affair, making the manner of Bahr<sup>dt</sup>'s life the ground of his opposition to his appointment. The minister, therefore, only allowed him to read lectures in the Philosophical Faculty. He accordingly announced that he would lecture on rhetoric and declamation; but let it privately be known, that he really meant to read on pastoral theology. It is said that 900 persons were assembled in the great auditorium of the university to hear him. His manner was that of a charlatan; he endeavoured to show how the feelings of an audience could be excited, and sought to make the manner of preaching usually adopted ridiculous. These lectures, however, did not bring him in enough money, which was his principal object. The poor man, therefore, proposed to read a course of lectures on morals, which citizens as well as students might attend. He succeeded in obtaining a considerable number of hearers—students, citizens, and officers; and endeavoured to exercise his theatrical talents upon this mixed audience. But he soon found this activity too troublesome and too little productive, and, therefore, retired to



a farm in the neighbourhood of Halle, and opened a coffee-house, "a course," he said, "his health demanded." Before his death he was cast into prison in Magdeburg, on account of a comedy which he wrote against the government. He sought by all manner of lies to avoid arrest, but in vain, and died in 1792. With regard to the views of this man we may say, as we said regarding those of Voltaire, that his character renders them undeserving of regard. Even his own description of himself is sufficient to show that he was destitute of principle; but this was made still more apparent by the publication of a collection of his letters. All kinds of deceit were to him equal if he could but gain money. His talents were such as, had they been turned to a good account, might have been made really serviceable; he had particularly the talent of writing in a clear and easy style, and a creative fancy. His views gradually formed themselves; he said that when he came to Halle he had renounced all doctrines contrary to reason, excepting those of inspiration and of divine influence. How he came to discover that these also were unreasonable, he thus describes: "The historical arguments of Semler, and the philosophical reasoning of Eberhardt, had made a great impression on me; it only failed to bring my feelings to reject these doctrines: this was effected by my being laughed at for holding them: this touched my pride, and I let them go as contrary to reason." He still retained the doctrine of God's existence, and the immortal soul. The contents of his writings, so far as they are his own, are of a romantic, extravagant character; he endeavours in every way to represent everything of a miraculous nature recorded in the Bible, as mere natural occurrences. His works, however, from the novel-like style in which they were written, were extensively circulated and read.

The university-theologians of this period, after Semler came out, divided themselves into three classes: some few remained orthodox; others sought to retain the form of the Bible doctrines, but soften down the leading ideas, representing them as unimportant, and turning their chief attention upon the moral portions of the scriptures; some rejected particular doctrines of the Bible: few new ideas were advanced by either party. Of those who belonged to the second class, we may mention the following as the most distinguished. Noesselt, in Halle, died 1807. He had formed himself principally upon the writings of the English theologians, and hence received the tendency not to attack openly the doctrines of Christianity, but rather to present them in a softer light. In the early part of his life he had defended these doctrines in his *Apologie*, but as his faith grew weaker, in the last edition he only published the first part of the work, which contains the general defence of Christianity, feeling no longer any disposition to undertake the defence of the several doctrines.

Morus, successor to Ernesti, in Leipzig, from the year 1775, died 1792. He also never decidedly attacked the Christian doctrines; but he endeavoured to show that it was very difficult to establish

the details of any of these doctrines upon a sure basis; and that, therefore, we need only hold to that which promotes moral improvement. Many of his students, however, rejected the doctrines themselves of their own accord.

Of those belonging to the third class are: 1. Eichhorn, in Göttingen. He published his "Introduction to the Old Testament," 1780; his "Universal Library for Biblical Literature," 1787; his "Introduction to the New Testament," 1804. He carried the principles of Semler fully out, and renounced entirely the orthodox faith. He treated Judaism as a mere human institution, which was no more under the direction of Providence than all other religions are. Christianity also was a mere local appearance, and all the distinguishing Christian ideas were explained away. He particularly manifested his bold and reckless criticism in his work on the Old Testament.

2. Steinbart, of the University of Frankfort on the Oder, died 1809. He published a work against what he called the "Language of the Schools," by which, however, he understood the doctrines respecting faith, good works, conversion, &c. His principal work is his "System of Pure Philosophy and Happiness," 1768. He proceeds upon the plan to which we alluded when speaking of the English theologians, of attempting to reconcile Christianity and natural religion. It is hardly necessary to say that this was to be effected by bringing the former down to the standard of the latter. He first advanced the idea, in Germany, that there is nothing in Christianity above the reach of reason. In this work Christ is represented as a mere man; the doctrines of original sin and atonement as the vain notions of Augustine.

3. The Abbot Henke, of the University of Helmstadt. He obtained extensive influence, as well by the periodical works which he conducted as by his "Ecclesiastical History." The titles of the former are, "Magazine for Religion and Philosophy," 1793—1802. "Magazine for Exegesis and Ecclesiastical History," six volumes. "Archives of Modern Ecclesiastical History," and "Eusebea."

4. Gabler, who was a pupil of Eichhorn, was at first settled in Altdorf, and afterwards in Jena. His influence was principally maintained by his "New Theological Journal," 1798—1801.

5. Paulus, in Heidelberg, whose "Commentary on the New Testament" has been circulated in two large editions. The evil which this work has produced has not arisen so much from the expositions which he gives, for these are so forced and unnatural that every one can see they are false, as from the low spirit which reigns throughout the work; by which everything exalted and divine is reduced to the level of every day occurrences. Paulus published his "Memorabilia," from 1787—1796.

Besides these learned men, belonging to the universities, many pastors took part in the work of reforming theology, and obtained an extensive influence. There were particularly many preachers

and philosophers in Berlin, whose efficiency in this enterprise deserves remark. Berlin was at this time the chief seat of the popular philosophers, Mendelssohn, Engel, Sulzer, Nicolai, and others, whose works were everywhere read and admired; these men stood in an intimate connexion with the then famous preachers Spalding and Teller. There was, indeed, a secret society formed in Berlin, of which not only these philosophers, but also several preachers were members. It was called the "Society for Light and Illumination," although it had another name taken from the day of the week on which it held its meetings. The author of this society was the librarian, Biester, whose object was to introduce a new system of religion. Their proceedings, however, were kept in profound secrecy. Spalding and Teller conducted themselves with great caution and prudence; they wished gradually to prostrate all the positive doctrines of religion, and, therefore, those who came out too boldly, and pushed on the work too rapidly, were checked and kept within more moderate bounds. They endeavoured to effect their object by making morality the great point, and representing the positive doctrines as of less importance. They substituted new ideas, general Deistical notions, in the place of the true biblical ideas, extracting the nerve and essence of the latter. Thus Spalding, opposing the doctrine of immediate divine influence, exchanged the important doctrine of the operations of the Holy Spirit for the dry notion of moral effort for improvement, under the aid of God's providence. He and Teller both opposed the use of what they called the figurative language of the east, and, therefore, proposed to substitute for regeneration, the purpose of leading a new life; for sanctification, reformation; for being filled with the Holy Spirit, to live reasonably, &c. Spalding's influence, through his works, "Worth of the Feelings in Religion," and the "Usefulness of the Office of a Minister," was very great.

Teller's Dictionary of the New Testament, which has passed through six editions, contains everywhere these mere moral ideas in the place of the true Christian doctrines. Christianity was to be more and more explained away until it ceased to be a doctrinal system altogether, and became a mere code of morals; men should constantly become more intellectual in their religion, a course in which they could not advance too far, but should not advance too rapidly. We have yet to mention two other clergymen, viz., Loeffler, from the year 1785, general superintendent in Gotha. He published the work of Souveren on the Platonism of the Fathers, and in the discourse which he affixed to it opposed the doctrines of the Deity of Christ, and the atonement; and Basedow, a zealot in the cause of illumination. He adopted a system of education which was a flat imitation of that proposed by Rousseau. He did not wish to be regarded as a decided enemy of the positive doctrines of Christianity, but as only desiring to render them agreeable to sceptics. He found thirty-two errors in Christianity, such as the doctrine of the Tri-



nity, the influences of the Holy Spirit, the two-fold nature of Christ, &c., &c.

The Wolfenbüttel Fragmentist. There was for a long time a debate who the author of this work really was; but Samuel Reimar, professor in Hamburg, acknowledging himself as the author, on his death-bed, has set the matter at rest. He sent the several papers to Lessing, by whom they were published. The first Fragment was on the Toleration of Deists; then followed five on the Old Testament, then those on the Resurrection of Christ, the possibility of a Revelation, and the most shameful of all, that on the object of Christ and his apostles. The author says, Christ wishes to establish an earthly kingdom, but failing in his enterprise made the despairing exclamation on the cross. Everything which this author wrote is marked by the most decided spirit of infidelity, which he feared, however, fully to declare. His arguments, therefore, are not those of a calm investigator but of a passionate enemy. He was entirely deficient in the true historical spirit, though in other respects not wanting in talents. Riem, a preacher in Berlin in 1782: he died in Paris, 1795, on the theatre of the revolution. He was a fanatical enemy of revealed religion, which he manifested in an open and profane manner in his "Religion of the Children of Light," Berlin, 1789, and in his "Christ and Reason," Brunswick, 1792.

Among all these authors, with the exception of Semler, there is not one who produced anything new; we have now, however, to mention two men, who, in connexion with Semler, hold the most important rank in the history of this period. The first of these is Lessing, born 1729. He was originally designed by his father for theology, and for this purpose was sent to Leipzig, to pursue his studies; but taking no interest in the lectures there delivered, he devoted himself to belles lettres. He lived privately in Berlin until 1769, then acted as director of the theatre for some time in Hamburg, and thence removed to Wolfenbüttel as librarian. Theology was not his profession, but his attention was directed to various subjects, and among others to this. He examined the various systems both of philosophy and theology, but his mind found contentment nowhere: the doctrines of Spinoza were most to his taste. He was far too sceptical to admit of his believing in revelation, and too much devoted to pleasure to be capable of a moral investigation: a life of pleasure, he said, was better than a holy end. Yet he had too much head and too much heart, not to see and feel that real practical Christianity was far more worthy of respect and far more elevating than the neological systems. Although he had no experience, he was able to respect it, which gives importance to what he says. His most important works are, 1, the "Wolfenbüttel Fragmentist," of which he was the publisher. His object was to perplex and drive into a corner the orthodox theologians, who were proud of their systems. But he said he should be sorry to have thought that he had published this

work out of enmity to Christianity. The learned theologian might be troubled by it, but not the Christian; the former might be perplexed in seeing his props of Christianity thus shattered, but what has the Christian to do with the hypothesis and the arguments of the theologian? the Christianity in which he feels himself so happy is still there.

2. His smaller theological discourses contained in the seventh volume of his works. In one of these he defends deism in the following manner :—

The Christian religion, he said, was the religion which Christ possessed, and this every man should endeavour to attain, although it is difficult to state precisely what it is. He assumed a natural religion, in the same sense in which we speak of natural rights, but when men come together they must endeavour to agree upon certain points, and thus arises a positive religion in the same way as positive rights. His discourse also on the Moravians is worthy of remark, in which the warm piety of this sect is cordially approved and defended against the objections of the orthodox. Also his discourse, "Christianity and Reason," in which Christianity is explained by Pantheism.

3. "His work on the Education of the Human Race." This, although a small work, is rich in matter. It admits of a two-fold interpretation in one view it seems to be a refutation of neology, but in another it is an attack on all revealed religion, and an apology for Pantheism.

It was then common to urge against Judaism these two objections: first, that it was too particular and confined; and secondly, that it did not contain the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. These objections Lessing answers in a masterly manner, although not altogether on principles which a Christian can adopt. "Judaism," he says, "is to be justified on the ground of God's condescension to human weakness. If God wished to lead men in the way of truth, it was necessary that he should place them under a course of education which implies gradual instruction; and it was always necessary that this course should be restricted to a single and secluded people that the difference between them and others might be apparent. He further remarks, that if Christianity contains the results to which reason leads, it is no proof that it is not a revelation; as in the arithmetic for children, the result is stated before the investigation commences. Under these views, however, lies hid a Pantheistical system. The "Collection of Frederick Schlegel" contains "Lessing's Thoughts and Opinions;" Leipzig, 1804, three vols. From this work we give the following leading ideas: He endeavours to show that it was by no means to the advantage of Christianity, that the popular philosophers had reduced it down to the standard of natural religion, in order to make it acceptable to sceptics. "Formerly," as he remarks, "there was a distinction between theology and philosophy, and each could pursue their course undisturbed: but the philosophers break down the

separating wall; and, under pretence of making us reasonable Christians, make us unreasonable philosophers." Leibnitz, he says, was of the opinion, that only to believe Christianity on the ground of reason, was not to believe it at all; and that the only book which, in the proper sense of the words, ever has been or ever can be, written on the truths of the Bible, is the Bible itself. Lessing, therefore, properly remarks, that it is the province of reason to decide whether the Bible be a revelation or not; but if this be settled in the affirmative, its containing things which we cannot understand, is rather a proof for, than against it. Another of his remarks, equally well founded, is, that faith in the truths of revelation is not to be obtained by the separate examination of the several distinct points, historical and doctrinal; that no one ever would become a believer in Christianity, if he endeavoured to make every fact and every doctrine certain beyond dispute, before he adopted it as a revelation. So far from this, they only can admit the several points to whom the holy contents of the entire Gospel has commended itself as truth which sheds light upon all the particulars. In this he agrees with Lord Bacon, who compares the defenders of Christianity who act upon the principle referred to, to those who place a candle in every corner of a large hall, instead of hanging a large chandelier in the middle of it, which would shed its light to the darkest recesses. Lessing expresses the same idea in another form, when he compares the Christian to the confident victor, who, disregarding the frontier fortifications of a land, seizes hold of the country itself; while the theologian is like a timid soldier who wastes his strength in the boundary, and never sees the land.

The other individual whom we mentioned as ranking with Semler was Herder, born in Morungen, in East Prussia, 1741. Herder was educated under the care of Christian parents, and by a pious clergyman, whose name was Trescho. The impressions made by his early education he never lost; he always endeavoured to defend what had, in his youth, appeared to him as true and holy. As imagination and feeling were the leading characteristics of his mind, his views of Christianity were rather of a sentimental cast, his knowledge of it was not deep and practical. The austerity of his teacher conspired to render the manner in which he regarded the subject unpleasant to Herder's feelings. In his attendance on the university, he devoted himself particularly to classical literature and belles lettres, with which he connected the study of theology. When we consider the effect of these studies, in connexion with what we have said of his disposition and his early education, we shall be able to explain his future course. His early impressions determined him from the first to appear as the defender of Christianity, which he really wished to be. But as he was not fully acquainted with what practical Christianity really was, and as he had received a prejudice against austerity, and as the belles lettres had fastened on his affections, his defence never proceeded upon the principles on which our religion either can or should be



defended. He did not represent Christianity as the only means of salvation for men sunk in sin and misery ; not as the narrow path in which men must walk to secure eternal life ; but he endeavoured to recommend it for its beauty and amiability ; to present the scriptures in an attractive light as “belles lettres” productions ; to recommend the sacred personages of the Bible for their moral loveliness. Such a justification as this can never be of much avail. Amidst all the temptations of life, and the difficulties with which our faith is assaulted, we must have some better foundation than this. And Herder is himself an example how little a faith, resting on such grounds, can affect the life.

He was called, as general superintendent, to Weimar, where he was brought into connexion with the first authors of Germany, and he himself praised and caressed as one of her best poets. The various temptations to vanity and worldly enjoyments, by which he was surrounded, he was unable to withstand. He endeavoured to become less and less offensive to the world, whilst he retained his character as defender of Christianity. But, though apparently its defender, he gradually relinquished all its doctrines, by representing all definite ideas upon them as doubtful. Everything was merged in a magic obscurity, over which he could poeticise at pleasure ; but he left his readers entirely at a loss to determine what was to be retained and what rejected. Hence Garve said, “his writings were like a distant cloud, of which no man could tell whether it was merely a cloud, or a city involved in obscurity yet filled with inhabitants.” In his early writings there is much that is useful, with good feeling, and many correct views. To this class belongs his “Oldest Records of the Human Race,” his “Letters on the Study of Theology,” and his “Remarks on the New Testament, from a newly opened Oriental Source.” His later works, on “The Redeemer,” and “The Resurrection of Christ,” have more or less of the character of obscurity of which we have spoken ; in reality they are neological. Of his “Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Man,” John von Müller says, “I find everything there but Christ, and what is the history of the world without CHRIST?”

#### SECTION VII.—*On the Influence of the New Philosophy.*

THE philosophy which prevailed, until the latter half of the last century, had pretended to be able to present a regular mathematical demonstration on all the subjects of which it treated. This philosophy of Wolf, although professing to defend Christianity, had been the means of exciting in many minds the spirit of scepticism. Many profound thinkers, striving in a wrong way to attain a knowledge of the truth, were at last brought to the conviction that this knowledge was unattainable. Besides this, Wolf had separated so completely natural and revealed religion, that many of

the advocates of his system contented themselves with the former ; and this gave rise to what is called the popular philosophy.

In the former part of the latter half of the eighteenth century, therefore, the philosophers were divided into those who thought they could demonstrate all the truths of natural and revealed religion, and those who had separated some few leading doctrines, which they thought were alone susceptible of demonstration. But a great revolution was at hand ; the philosophy of Kant appeared in decided opposition to everything which had previously passed under that name. Kant was excited, by the scepticism of Hume, to investigate the ability of the human powers to attain to a knowledge of invisible things. This was something new, for the German philosophers had been accustomed to speculate, with inquiring whether reason was adequate to the discovery of the truth. The result of Kant's investigations was, that man was entirely incompetent to the task of attaining to a knowledge of invisible things, and that the demonstrations of Wolf amounted to nothing. He was not, however, willing entirely to give up metaphysics, and as he could not found a system on demonstration, he attempted to erect one on postulates of practical reason. The hinge upon which his system turns, is the *categorical imperative* in man ; that is, the consciousness that we should be and do what the moral law requires. This *categorical imperative* cannot be denied, as every man carries it in his own bosom. But if this be not self-contradictory, impelling us to an object which does not exist or which cannot be attained, there must be a metaphysics which contains these three truths, the existence of God, the liberty of man, and the immortality of the soul. For if this *imperative* be not deceitful, man must have the power of realizing the object to which it impels, and this is his liberty. But the excellence to which it urges us is in this world never fully attained ; there must, therefore, be a future state in which it may be completely realized. There must also be a governor who has this excellence in himself, and who can distribute rewards in proportion to virtue, hence a God. Within these limits, and to explain and illustrate these three truths, Kant confined the whole of metaphysics. With regard to this system it may be remarked, that its negative part contains more truth than its positive portion. He is right in denying the possibility of reason attaining a knowledge of the infinite ; that there is a gulf here over which no bridge can be built, it must be leapt. He should, therefore, have been led to acknowledge a revelation, which the Christians of that day expected he would do. How this necessarily follows from his principles, is proved in a work entitled "Immanuel, a book for Jews and Christians," written by a distinguished statesman. In reference to the positive part, what is new therein is not true, and what is true is not new. The truth is that the moral feelings of man will, amidst all his doubts, urge him to believe in another world ; but the peculiar form in which Kant sought to present this subject is false. His argument is, that

if this *imperative* be not self-contradictory there must be a God, human liberty, and immortality; but this *imperative* is not false, therefore these three truths must be admitted. But in this argument there is a *petitio principii*. It takes for granted that the world is created and exists for a definite object. But this the most consequent philosophical systems deny. They say the idea of an object is a gross anthropomorphism; that he who proposes an end to himself must employ means to attain that end; but this implies that the end cannot be *immediately* attained, and, therefore, that the being who proposes to himself an end or object must be imperfect; in the world, therefore, no such striving after an end can be admitted, but the working of an absolute necessity. When Kant, therefore, takes for granted that the world has an object, he assumes, what was to be proved, the existence of an intelligent personal Deity. The form of his argument is hence false. It may further be remarked that, according to Kant's system, these three important doctrines are made very subordinate, in that they are admitted, not on the ground of their own evidence, but upon the ground of this *categorical imperative*. In this view man becomes a law to himself. God only distributes the amount of happiness which has been merited. Holiness is also presented in a very subordinate light, because, according to this manner of conceiving of it, it must receive its happiness from without, which is a false idea of the subject, against which even Socrates had opposed himself; this is the most deficient point in the system. With regard to the effects produced by the philosophy of Kant, it may be remarked, that they were both salutary and injurious. It prostrated the pride of those who pretended to be able to demonstrate everything, and it aroused the mind from the drowsiness which had been produced by the popular philosophy. Its evil effects were, that a cold frigid spirit was thrown over its advocates, who employed themselves about dry morality and barren intellect, rejecting all deep feeling as fanaticism; even prayer itself was rejected. Hence all the sciences to which this philosophy extended its influence lost their vitality, and assumed a pedantic, scholastic, schoolmaster-like aspect. This was especially the case with theology and history. They were only estimated so far as they solved the problem of the Kantish morals; what was individual and characteristic was not regarded. Christ himself was estimated only for having taught a system of morals analogous to those of Kant. This philosophy spread itself more rapidly than any had ever done before it. Among the theologians its defenders were Staudlin, Schmidt, and Tieftrunk, although the former at last gave it up. Even those who did not formally adopt the system, were obliged to conform themselves to it, as was the case with the popular philosophers in Berlin, Nicolai, Garve, and Mendelssohn; they complained much, that the new philosophy had occasioned so much trouble and difficulty, where everything was quite clear before. Reinhard, although he did not embrace the system of Kant, allowed himself to be so far influ-



enced by it as to introduce many of his principles in his system of morals. All men, however, of much feeling opposed a philosophy which was so dry and scholastic; of this number were particularly Hamann and Herder—see Kant's "Religion within the limits of Pure Reason," and Tieftunk's "Censure of the doctrines of the Protestant Church."

Another crisis in the history of philosophy was at hand. The system which Kant had erected, was destroyed by one of his own pupils (Fichte). Fichte followed a different path from that pursued by his predecessor. Kant had shown that man was not able to attain to a distinct knowledge of sensible things, that the predicates which we attribute to things arise only from the categories of our own minds, but what it is without us, which occasions the perception of these attributes or predicates, we cannot know; it is an unknown power, X. But Fichte proposed the question, that if we know nothing of the essence of things, if they be an unknown X, and their predicates categories of our own minds, what evidence have we that the things themselves exist? what are they? and how can they come in contact with our minds? His conclusion is, that the external world, the X of Kant, has no existence; the qualities alone exist, and these merely as laws of the human mind. The material world is nothing, there is nothing out of ourselves, it is only from the laws of the mind that the world appears to exist. We thus attain an object which all philosophy aims at, the removal of the difference between matter and spirit, as in this view there is no such thing as matter. Fichte's view of the human soul was the following: God the infinite *ens* comes to *existens*, in that he *exists* in the activity of finite thinking spirits; the activity or *thinking* of these finite thinking principles is the existence of the infinite *ens*. Whence come then the external appearances? If the finite thinking principle was confined entirely within itself, it would merge in the infinite, and become nothing. That this *principle* should have reality and life, it is necessary that it should have an object within itself; hence the infinite thinking principle when it comes to existence in the finite, places at the same time with the finite thinking principle a limitation; therefore this limitation is the apparently existing material world; and hence with every *ego* there is placed a *non ego*. The activity and life of every finite thinking principle of every ego consists in breaking through this limitation. This occurs in a two-fold manner, first, when the human spirit pervades and thinks through the objects opposed to it, so that they pass over into the spirit and become one with it, and secondly, when the thinking principle raises itself above all laws of the *non ego*, and lives free according to its own laws. This system of Fichte was more consequent than that of Kant, but it failed to solve the problem, the removal of the difference of matter and spirit; dualism remains in this system as well as in the other. The problem is indeed apparently solved by denying the existence of matter, but the opposition is only removed to the mind itself,

where a limitation is placed. This philosophy is in one view a very active living one, but its life is only abstract, as it concerns itself only with abstract thinking, and neglects every other department and faculty of the soul. Its influence was so far beneficial, as it excited in many a great degree of mental activity, and in others produced great moral strictness. The evils which it produced were also great. All the material sciences were despised, and importance attributed only to abstract speculations. A degree of freedom also was ascribed to men which belongs only to God, which excited the greatest self-sufficiency. The most important works on this system are Fichte's "Appeal to the public on the charge made against him of Atheism," Jena, 1801. "Instructions for a Happy Life," Berlin, 1806. In these writings, this philosophy came into more immediate contact with religion; see also, "An exhibition of the true character of the nature-philosophy for the improvement of the doctrines of Fichte," Tübingen, 1806.

Schelling followed Fichte. He proposed for his object the actual removing of all opposition between matter and spirit: according to his system, an existence is ascribed as much to the material as the immaterial world; the former being only a different mode of expression or manifestation. The spirit which thinks through these material objects, frees them from their bonds by freeing the spirit which is in them. In so far, however, as the laws of matter are the expressions of the spirit, the latter only finds itself again when it thinks through the matter and appropriates it to itself. The only object, therefore, of speculation on the external world is to come to a full knowledge or consciousness of ourselves; that is, to find without us what we have in ourselves. According to these views, God cannot be regarded as a mere *in*, since this would be lifeless. If God be living he must have an opposition in himself, the removal of which is his life; hence the unity of God has ever manifested itself in multitude and variety. The spirit manifested itself in matter, that the variety may reach the unity, and matter be freed and raised to spirit. This is the eternal activity of God. The whole business of philosophy is concerned with this point, the coming of God to self-consciousness.

This philosophy had the effect of spreading through Germany an element different from any which had previously prevailed. It produced a deep feeling and consciousness of a living and infinite principle in the world and in men, in nature and in spirit. It destroyed the lifeless idea of a God, who stood behind the world without having any real unity with it. It aroused men to strive after knowledge, in a deeper and more effectual manner, because it did not employ itself with abstract speculations, but with intuitive views; in this respect it greatly exceeded the popular philosophy, or that of Wolf or Kant. Its influence on theology therefore was very great; whilst the popular philosophy and that of Kant sought to expunge everything above the reach of reason, that of Schelling again awakened the feelings for the infinite. Schelling's

philosophical works were published together in 1809, including the *Treatise on Human Liberty*; see also *Bruns on the Principle of Divine and Human things*, Berlin, 1802; *Philosophy and Religion*, Tübingen, 1804; a monument to the work of Jacobi on Divine things, Tübingen, 1812; Controversial works on this subject—*Susskind's Examination of the Doctrine of Schelling respecting God, the Creation and Liberty*, 1812; *Jacobi on Divine things and their Revelation*, 1811.

These two philosophers were opposed by a man whose influence was not only great during his life but continues to the present time. This was Frederick Henry Jacobi. He opposed the speculations of Kant as well as those of Fichte and Schelling; he admitted with regard to the latter two, that they were consequent, as well as Spinoza, but the result he could not embrace. He could not prevail on himself to renounce his faith in human liberty, a personal God, personal immortality, and the objective nature of evil.

He, therefore, opposed to these systems, the inward consciousness we have of divine things, and maintained it was impossible, by speculation, to arrive at a knowledge of these subjects; there must be an immediate and intuitive knowledge of them, whether this intuitive perception be called reason or consciousness. This intuitive feeling teaches us that there is a God, who stands as *thou* before our *ego*—something different from man. It teaches also the liberty of man; personal immortality and the objective nature of evil. Whilst Jacobi presented these views, he appeared at the same time in hostility against revealed religion. He said that historical experience was as much mediate as speculation, and, therefore, history was as unfit as speculation to afford a true knowledge of divine things. Man cannot believe in an eternal free God, by merely hearing a relation concerning him; the ground of this must, therefore, lie in the soul itself. These views are principally expressed in the introduction to his work on divine things, in which he appears as the opponent of Claudius.

Jacobi overlooked two important points: first, he did not consider that it might be asked him, where faith in his four doctrines is to be found beyond the limits of Christianity? The whole east is destitute of it—the western philosophy knows as little about it; only weak echoings of this truth are anywhere to be heard. Only a few individuals among the most cultivated of mankind, have had an indistinct knowledge of them in any period of the world. Jacobi himself borrowed them from historical Christianity, though he was ungrateful enough to deny his obligation. He cannot express himself upon this subject, except in terms borrowed from the Bible. It cannot, indeed, be said, that we believe these truths merely because they have been historically communicated to us, but because we are related to God; and this relation, even in our present fallen state, is not entirely destroyed, although the fall has blinded and obscured our knowledge: tradition alone, therefore,



is not the foundation of our faith, but this feeling of our relation to God. We find nowhere beyond the influence of the Gospel, the humble temper of a servant represented as the ideal of morality. We find no such character as that of the humble Redeemer; we never meet the idea that true greatness consists in poverty of spirit. However strongly a man may believe on the ground of his own consciousness, yet he must admit if God had not revealed himself we should never have arrived at a knowledge of true happiness, and that a revelation was necessary to render these doctrines definite and secure. But Christianity contains something more than these four truths of Jacobi; it contains the plan of redemption; a knowledge of the purposes of God cannot be obtained by intuition, yet here is faith essential. Even admitting, therefore, the possibility of learning the truths referred to, from a different source, it does not destroy the necessity of a historical revelation. See the works of Jacobi published by Fleischer, particularly the second volume of his work on "Divine Things."

After philosophy, in connexion with various other causes, had exercised such an influence on theology, a theological system was formed as the result of all these efforts at illumination. To this system the name of rationalism has been given; a name first applied by Reinhard. The system is, in fact, the same which was previously called deism. This system not only sought to obtain stability for itself, but appeared in decided hostility to Christianity. As to its tenability, it may be remarked, that the rationalist must either undertake to support his doctrines on the ground of reason and argument, or found them upon feeling. If he takes the first course, he must do it after the method of the philosophy of Wolf; for that alone undertakes to establish in a demonstrative way the doctrines of God, freedom and immortality. But the weakness of this philosophy has long since been proved. If the rationalist gives this up, he must place himself on the foundation of feeling, on the principle of Jacobi; and this is the fact with the most of them. When he takes this ground he loses all right to contend against a believer in the Bible. For he can no longer demand of him, that doctrines which are beyond the reach of reason, should be reduced to its standard and justified before its tribunal. The rationalist must acknowledge that he cannot do this for his own doctrines of the personality of God, human liberty, &c. With the same weapons, therefore, with which he contends against the believer he is attacked by the Pantheist, against whom he cannot maintain his ground. The Pantheist declares his proofs mere subjective deception, and his doctrines anthropomorphic views. The believer in the Bible can also object to the rationalist, that his deistical doctrines are drawn from Christianity, although deprived of their glory and power. And further, that his system, excluding the ideas of a revelation, divine government, and redemption, presents a problem which does not admit of a solution. The idea of God which rationalism contains, is borrowed from the Bible; but if God

really possesses all the attributes here ascribed to him, it would appear necessary that so wise and good a Being should have a nearer relation to his creatures, and give them some surer guide in reference to divine things than human reason, which teaches so many various and inconsistent doctrines, and which, beyond the limits of Christianity, has never yet presented the idea of God which Christian deism contains. The rationalist acknowledges the objective nature of morality ; but for his certainty on this point he is indebted to revelation, and yet arbitrarily rejects the doctrines of the fall and of redemption through Jesus Christ. In this way he is led into another difficulty. Whence is evil? the rationalist is obliged to refer it to God, that through the struggle between good and evil the former might be promoted. Whilst the denier of a revelation makes God the author of evil, he gives no explanation of the manner in which evil can be rooted out of the heart of man. His blindness on this point arises from his having no deep and proper knowledge of good or evil. The positive part of rationalism thus consisting of Christian doctrines deprived of their glory and consistency, is equally unsatisfactory for the human heart and human understanding, particularly in reference to the doctrine of evil.

The rationalist undertakes, however, to prove, not only that Christianity is improbable, but that it is contrary to reason, and entirely inadmissible. In this effort its weakness is most clearly exposed. It proceeds from the principle that God never works without the intervention of secondary causes, and therefore an immediate revelation is impossible. Revelation can only be mediate, and consist in a development of what already lies in the nature of man. Hence arises the distinction between naturalism and supernaturalism ; the former regarding every religious communication as mediate, consisting in the development of what is in man, the latter maintaining an immediate communication of divine truth, not derived from the human mind itself. The rationalist assumes that God, at the beginning, formed the world as a machine, with whose powers, having once set them in motion, he never interferes. This view is in the first place false, but admitting its correctness, the conclusion drawn from it by the rationalist is by no means necessary. For, granting that God does not interfere with the world, it does not follow that he cannot and will not. At most, the improbability, but not the impossibility, of an immediate revelation follows from this view.

But the view itself is false ; God is not a machinist, who, having finished his work, retires behind : the life in the universe cannot be regarded as absolutely distinct from the life of God. God continues and supports the world by a continual creation, for such in fact is preservation. The life of the world is the breath of Jehovah ; its active powers, the working of its omnipresence ; the laws of nature are not therefore fixed once and for ever. Augustine says, *Lex naturae est voluntas Dei, et miraculum non fit contra naturam, sed contra quam est nota natura*. The laws of nature are

mere abstractions, which men make from the usual operations of God. It can, therefore, by no means be said, that his unusual operations, as in immediate revelations and miracles, are violations of the laws of nature. There is no essential difference between immediate and mediate operations; it is merely the difference between unusual and usual. And if God would reveal himself as a living and personal Being, these extraordinary operations of his power are essential, as they contain the proof that nature is not a piece of dead mechanism.

But the rationalist also endeavours to show the improbability of a revelation upon moral principles. He says it would prove that God had made man imperfect, if later communications and revelations were necessary. But in this objection it is overlooked that man is not now, as he was originally created. In his primitive state, an immediate revelation might not have been necessary, but in his fallen state the case is essentially different. The rationalist farther demands, why was the revelation not made immediately after the fall, before so many generations had passed away? To this we may answer, that God appears to have determined to conduct and educate the whole race as an individual, and in the idea of education lies that of gradual progress.

Finally, it is objected that the revelation is not universal. In answer to this we may say, that the difficulty presses the deist as much as the Christian, because it affects the doctrine of providence. The deist makes religion and refinement the greatest blessings of men; but why has God left so many ages and nations destitute of these blessings? If the deist must confess his ignorance upon this point, why may not the Christian? Besides this, Christians themselves are to blame, that the revelation has not been more extensively spread; why have they only within a few years awaked to the importance of this work? And why do the rationalists, of all others, take the least interest in it? It may further be remarked, that the New Testament does not teach that those who have never heard the Gospel are (on this account) to be condemned. The apostle says that God winked at the times of ignorance, that those who sin without law shall be judged without law. And it may be hoped, as Christ is the only means of salvation, that those who have not heard the Gospel here, may hear it hereafter. Peter says that the Saviour communicated the knowledge of his redemption to those who had died before his appearance.

See in answer to Roehr's *Letters on Rationalism*, Zoellich's *Letters on Supranaturalism*, 1821; and see Tittmann on *Naturalismus, Supernaturalismus, and Atheismus*; Leipzig, 1816.

Bockshammer's *Revelation and Theology*, Stuttgart, 1820.



## ESSAY XXII.

# TRANSCENDENTALISM.\*

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It is, we think, undeniable, that since the death of Doctor Thomas Brown of Edinburgh, metaphysical research has been at a stand in Great Britain. In the southern part of the island this had been the case for a much longer period, but the sharp and sceptical enterprise of the Scotch kept philosophical debate in motion for a time, so that a sect was formed, and we speak as familiarly of the Scotch school as we do of the Pythagorean or the Eleatic. But that line seems to have reached its term, and the few who publish at this time are either the lowliest compilers from Stewart and Brown, or, as is more frequently the case, such as have gone off in a direction altogether different, in search of a profounder philosophy. Of the latter sort there are some among ourselves, and we have it now in view to point out some of the causes which may account for the essays to introduce a modified transcendentalism.

In America, the earliest school of metaphysics was founded by the followers of Locke; and, with the clew of this great inquirer in his hand, Jonathan Edwards ventured into a labyrinth from which no English theologian had ever come out safe. By the just influence of his eminently patient, and discriminating, and conclusive research, this greatest of modern Christian metaphysicians put his contemporaries and their descendants upon a sort of discourse which will perhaps characterise New England Calvinism as long as there is a fibre of it left. In speaking of Edwards, we distinctly avow our conviction that he stands immeasurably above many who have followed in his steps, and attempted his methods. If the species of reasoning which he introduced into American theology is susceptible of easy abuse, and if, in fact, it has been abused to

\* Published in 1839, in review of the following works:—

1. "Elements of Psychology, included in a Critical Examination of Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, with Additional Pieces. By Victor Cousin, Peer of France, Member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, Member of the Institute, and Professor of the History of Ancient Philosophy in the Faculty of Literature. Translated from the French, with an Introduction and Notes, by the Rev. C. S. Henry, D. D."
2. "Introduction to the History of Philosophy. By Victor Cousin, Professor of Philosophy of the Faculty of Literature at Paris. Translated from the French, by Henning Gottfried Linberg."
3. "An Address delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday, 15th July, 1838. By Ralph Waldo Emerson."

disastrous ends, we rejoice to acquit this great and holy man of willingly giving origin to the evil. And in what we shall cursorily remark concerning New England theology, we explicitly premise that we do not intend our Congregational brethren indiscriminately, but a defined portion of them, well known for many years as daring speculators. The theology of this school has always been in a high degree metaphysical; but the metaphysics is of a hyperborean sort, exceedingly cold and fruitless. In the conduct of a feeble or even an ordinary mind, the wire-drawing processes of New England theologizing become jejune and revolting. Taught to consider mere ratiocination as the grand and almost sole function of the human mind, the school-boy, the youth, and the professor, pen in hand, go on, day after day, in spinning out a thread of attenuated reasoning, often ingenious, and sometimes legitimately deduced, but in a majority of instances a concatenation of unimportant propositions. It has too often been forgotten by the disciples of this school, that a man may search in useless mines, and that it is not everything that is worth being proved. Hence the barrenness and frigidity of the sermons which were heard from the pulpits of New England during the latter half of the last century. Many of these, and many of the dissertations and treatises which poured from the press, were proofs of remarkable subtilty and patience of investigation, and showed how easy it is to draw forth an endless line from the stores of a single mind. For, in this operation, it was remarkable that the preacher or philosopher relied almost exclusively on his own stores. There was little continued unfolding of scriptural argument, and little citation of the great reasonings of ancient or modern philosophy. Each metaphysician spun by himself and from his own bowels. The web of philosophical argument was dashed with no strong woof from natural science, embroidered with no flowers of literature. Where this metaphysics was plied by a strong hand, as was that of President Edwards, it was noble indeed; deriving strength and honour from its very independence and self-sufficiency. In the hands of his son, Dr. Edwards, there were equal patience, equal exactness, equal subtilty, but no new results: still there were undeniable marks of genius; as there were also in the controversy which then began to be waged among the dwindled progeny of the giants, on the great questions of liberty and necessity, moral agency, and the nature of virtue.

But when the same products were sought in a colder climate, and from the hands of common and unrefined men; when every schoolmaster or parish clergyman found himself under a necessity of arguing upon the nature of the soul, the nature of virtue, and the nature of agency; when with some this became the great matter of education, to the neglect of all science and beautiful letters, then the consequences were disastrous; and a winter reigned in the theology of the land, second only to that of the scholastic

age, and like that dispersed only by the return of the sun of vital religion.

In the hands of a subtle errorist, such as Emmons, these metaphysical researches led to gross absurdities, some of which still survive. We believe a few of the elder and less sophisticated preachers of New England are to this day teaching, and that their staring auditors are to this day trying to believe, that the soul is a series of exercises; that God is the author of sin; and that in order to escape damnation, one must be willing to be damned. Others, running away with an error less innocent because lying nearer the source of moral reasoning, and less alarming in its guise, reasoned themselves and their hearers into the opinion, that all sin is selfishness, and that all holiness is the love of being in general. Taking the premises of the great Edwards, they deduced a system of false theology, which under its first phase as Hopkinsianism, and under its second phase as Taylorism, has been to our church the *fons et origo malorum*, and which, in union with the Epicureanism of the Paley school, has assumed the name of Calvinism to betray it to its enemies.

It is only great wisdom which can avoid one extreme without rushing to the other. The golden mean, so much ridiculed by zealots, is precisely that which imbecility could never maintain. In philosophy, as well as in common life and religion, we find individuals and bodies of men acting on the fallacy that the reverse of wrong, as such, is right. Human nature could not be expected to endure such a metaphysics as that of New England. It was not merely that it was false, and that it set itself up against our consciousness and our constitutional principle of self-love; but it was cheerless, it was arctic, it was intolerable: a man might as well carry frozen mercury in his bosom, as this in his soul. In a word, it had nothing cordial in it, and it left the heart in collapse. If it had remained in the cells of speculative adepts it might have been tolerated; but it was carried into the pulpit, and doled forth to a hungry people under the species of bread and wine. No wonder nature revolted against such a dynasty. No wonder that, in disgust at such a pabulum, men cast about for a substitute, and sought it in tame Arminianism or genteel Deism.

The calculating people of our country, in certain portions of it, have long been enamoured of a system of ethics which is reducible to the rules of loss and gain. It is much more level to the apprehensions of such to say that two and two make four, or that prodigality makes poor, or that doing good makes profit, or that gain is godliness, or that virtue is utility, than to plead for an imperative law of conscience, or for an eternal distinction between right and wrong. The former systems came home to the business and bosoms of the calculator. Though he had learned to speak evil of Epicurus, yet he clasped Paley to his bosom; and as all men admitted that this philosopher and divine was a mighty reasoner, and a fascinating writer, so the calculator went further, and



adopted his ethical heresy as the basis of all morals. Some, who could not take the system in its gross form, received it under that modification, which appears in the theology of President Dwight. Long, therefore, before the mask was completely cast away by Bentham, Mill, and the Utilitarians of England, there were hundreds of young men who had imbibed the quintessence of the poison through their college text-books, or through the introduction of the same principles into the received authorities of law-schools and courts of justice. We think it possible to show, that the prevalence of this degrading view of the nature of holiness, namely, the view which allows to virtue no essence but its tendency to happiness, has directly led to a laxity in private morals, to a subtlety of covert dishonesty, to an easy construction of church symbols and of other contracts, and to that measurement of all things divine and human by the scale of profit, which is falsely charged upon our whole nation by our foreign enemies. We think it possible to show that such is the tendency of Utilitarianism. And such being its tendency, we should despair of ever seeing any return from this garden of Hesperides, with its golden apples, were it not for a safe-guard in the human soul itself, placed there by all-wise Providence. For the system runs counter to nature. Reason about it as you will, the soul cannot let so monstrous an error lie next to itself; the heart will throb forth its innate tendency, and conscience will assert its prerogative. Nor will men believe concerning virtue, any more than concerning truth, that it has no foundation but its tendency to happiness; even though such tendency be as justly predicable of the one as of the other. The very consideration of what is involved in the monosyllable *ought*, is sufficient to bring before any man's consciousness the sense of a distinction between virtue and utility, between that which it is prudent to do, and that which it is right to do. In process of time, as more adventurous and reckless minds sailed out further upon this sea of thought, especially when some theologians went so boldly to work as to declare, that, in turning to God, we regard the Supreme Being in no other light than as an infinite occasion of personal happiness to ourselves; when this began to be vented, thoughtful men were taken aback. They queried whither they were going. They remembered that their religious emotions had included other elements. They reconsidered the grounds of the adhesion they had given in to Paley, to Epicurus, and to self. They paused in their rapid career and looked at the system of general consequences. And in a good number of instances, they were ashamed of the way in which they had been trepanned out of their original ideas, and sought for something to put in the place of the idol they were indignantly throwing down. We know such men; we know that they will read these pages; men who have gone down after their guides into the vaults of the earth-born philosophy, hoping to see treasures, and gain rest to the cravings of their importunate inquiring, but who have come up again

lamenting their error, and mortified that they had been abused. These things we have said concerning the Utilitarian ethics, now prevailing under different forms in America, and chiefly in the Northern and Eastern States, as furnishing an additional reason for the eager search that undeniably exists, after a more spiritual, elevating, and *moral* philosophy.

In tracing the irresistible progress of thought and opinion, as it regards philosophy, we have seen two sources of that dissatisfaction which, for several years, has prevailed with respect to hitherto reigning metaphysics; namely, a disrelish for the coldness, heartlessness, and fruitlessness of the New England methods, and a dread of the doctrine of Utilitarianism. It might have been happy for us, if the proposal for a change had come *ab intra*, if one of our own productive minds had been led to forsake the beaten track, and point out a higher path. But such has not been the case. It has so happened, that no great native philosophical leader has as yet arisen to draw away one scholar from the common routine. This has been very unfortunate. If we are to make experiment of a new system, we would fain have it fully and fairly before our eyes, which can never be the case so long as we receive our *philosophemata* by a double transportation, from Germany *via* France, in parcels to suit the importers; as fast as the French forwarding philosopher gets it from Germany, and as fast as the American consignee can get it from France. There is a great inconvenience in the reception of philosophical theories by instalments; and if our cisatlantic metaphysicians import the German article, we are sometimes forced to wait until they have learned the language well enough to hold a decent colloquy in it. Such, however, is precisely the disadvantage under which the young philosophers of America now labour. We hear much of German philosophy, and of the revelations which have been made to its adepts; much very adroit use of certain disparaging terms, easily learned by heart, and applied to the old system, as "flat," "unspiritual," "empirical," and "sensuous;" we hear much of the progress made in ontological and psychological discovery, in the foreign universities. But, if we hear truth, the hierophants of the new system among us are not so much more intimate with the source of this great light than some of their silent readers, as to give them any exclusive right to speak *ex cathedra* about transcendental points. Some of them are busily learning French, in order to read in that language any *rifacimento* of Teutonic metaphysics which may come into their hands. Some are learning German; others have actually learnt it. He who cannot do either, strives to gather into one the Sibylline oracles and abortive scraps of the gifted but indolent Coleridge, and his gaping imitators; or in default of all this, sits at the urn of dilute wisdom, and sips the thrice-drawn infusion of English from French, and French from German.

It might have been happy for us, we say, if the reformation in our philosophy had some root of its own in our own soil. But

what is this vaunted German philosophy, of which our young men have learned the jargon? We shall endeavour to give an intelligible answer to so reasonable an inquiry. In attempting to offer a few satisfactory paragraphs on this, it is far from our purpose to profess to be adepts. We have seen a little, heard a little, and read a little respecting it. We have, even, during the last fifteen years, turned over one or two volumes of German metaphysics, and understood, perhaps, almost as much as some who have become masters; yet we disclaim a full comprehension of the several systems. The Anglo-Saxon *dummheit*, with which Germans charge the English, reigns, we fear, in us, after an inveterate sort. We have tried the experiment, and proved ourselves unable to see in a fog. Our night-glasses do not reach the transcendental. In a word, we are born without the *Anschauungsvermögen*: and this defect, we are persuaded, will "stick to our last sand." We once said to a German friend, speaking of Schleiermacher, "But we do not understand his book." "Understand it!" cried the other, with amazement, "what then, but do you not feel it?" We deem ourselves competent, nevertheless, to give the plain reader some notices of the progress of transcendental philosophy.

The German philosophers whose names are most frequently heard in this country, and who indeed mark the regular succession of masters, are Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. It would be easy to multiply names, but these are the men who have carried forward the torch, from hand to hand. Though there were German metaphysicians before Kant, it is needless to name them, as he borrowed nothing from them, and certainly has the merit of standing forth to propagate a system altogether undervived from his countrymen. Perhaps the best way to put our readers in possession of the peculiar tenets of Kant, would be to direct them to an able syllabus of his system, by Professor Stapfer, translated for the Biblical Repertory for the year 1828. But to maintain the connexion of our remarks, we shall furnish further information; and if we enter somewhat more into detail here than in what follows, it is because the transition to Kant, from his predecessors, is more abrupt than from this philosopher to any who succeeded him. In order to get a glimpse of what he taught, we must, as far as possible, lay aside all the prepossessions of the British school. We must not only cease to attribute all our knowledge to sensation and reflection, as our fathers were taught to do, but we must lay aside, as unsatisfactory, all the explanations of Reid and his followers respecting first truths and intuitive principles. We must no longer regard philosophy as a science of observation and induction, and must dismiss all our juvenile objection to a purely *a priori* scheme of metaphysics. It is the first purpose of Kant, in his own terms, to inquire "how synthetical judgments *a priori* are possible, with respect to objects of experience;" as, for example, how the idea of necessary causal connexion arises, when it is conceded that nothing is given by experience but the mere succession



of events.\* Indeed, it was Hume's speculations on cause and effect which, as Kant tells us, first "broke his dogmatic slumbers." Proceeding from this to all the other instances in which we arrive at absolute, necessary, universal, or intuitive truths, he proves that these are not the result of experience. No induction, however broad, can ever produce the irresistible conviction with which we yield ourselves to the belief of necessary truth. "Experience (and this is the concession of Reid himself) gives us no information of what is necessary, or of what ought to exist."† In such propositions as the following: "A straight line is the shortest between two points: There is a God: The soul is immortal," &c., there is an amalgamation (synthesis) of a subject with an attribute, which is furnished neither by the idea of the subject, nor by experience. These synthetical judgments therefore are *a priori*, or independent of experience; that is, there is something in them beyond what experience gives. There is, therefore, a function of the soul prior to all experience, and to investigate this function of the soul is the purpose of the Critique of Pure Reason. "Let us," says Stapfer, in a happy illustration, "imagine a mirror endued with perception, or sensible that external objects are reflected from its surface; let us suppose it reflecting on the phenomena which it offers to a spectator, and to itself. If it come to discover the properties which render it capable of producing these phenomena, it would find itself in possession of two kinds of ideas, perfectly distinct. It would have a knowledge of the images which it reflects, and of the properties which it must have possessed previous to the production of these images. The former would be its *a posteriori* knowledge; whilst in saying to itself, "my surface is plain, it is polished, I am impenetrable to the rays of light," it would show itself possessed of *a priori* notion, since these properties, which it would recognize as inherent in its structure, are more ancient than any image reflected from its surface, and are the conditions to which are attached the faculty of forming images, with which it would know itself endowed. Let us push this extravagant fiction a little further. Let us imagine that the mirror represented to itself, that external objects are entirely destitute of depth; that they are all placed upon the same plane; that they traverse each other, as the images do upon its surface, &c., and we shall have an example of objective reality attributed to modifications purely subjective. And if we can figure to ourselves the mirror as analysing and combining, in various ways, the properties with which it perceived itself invested (but of which it should have contented itself to establish the existence and examine the use); drawing from these combinations conclusions relative to the organization, design, and origin of the objects which paint themselves on its surface; founding, it may be, entire systems upon the conjectures which the analysis of its

\* Kritik d. reinen Vernunft. Leipzig, 1818, p. 15.

† Essay on the Active Powers. Edinb. quarto, 1788, p. 31, p. 279, also Intellectual Powers, Essay vi., c. 6.

properties might suggest, and which it might suppose itself capable of applying to an use entirely estranged from their nature and design; we should have some idea of the grounds and tendency of the reproaches which the author of the critical philosophy addresses to human reason, when forgetting the veritable destination of its laws, and of those of the other intellectual faculties; a destination which is limited to the acquisition and perfecting of experience, it employs these laws to the investigation of objects beyond the domain of experience, and assumes the right of affirming on their existence, of examining their qualities, and determining their relations to man."

Instead therefore of examining the nature of things, the objective world without us, Kant set himself to scrutinize the microcosm, to learn the nature of the cognitive subject. In pursuing this inquiry, he finds, not that the mind is moulded by its objects, but that the objects are moulded by the mind. The external world is in our thoughts, such as it is, simply because our thoughts are necessarily such as they are. The moulds, so to speak, are within us. We see things only under certain conditions; certain laws restrain and limit all our functions. We conceive of a given event as occurring in time and in space; but this time and this space are not objective realities, existing whether we think about them or not: they are the mere *forms a priori*. Our minds refuse to conceive of sensible objects, except under these forms. Time and space therefore are not the results of experience, neither are they abstract ideas; for all particular times and spaces are possible, only by reason of this original constitution of the mind.\*

According to this system, all that of which we can be cognizant is either necessary or contingent. That which is necessary is *a priori*, and belongs to the province of pure reason. That which is contingent is *a posteriori*, and belongs to the province of experience. The former he calls pure, the latter empirical; and it is the circle of knowledge contained in the former which constitutes the far-famed Transcendental Philosophy.†

Every English and American reader must fail to penetrate even the husk of German and mock-German philosophy, unless he has accepted the distinction between the reason and the understanding. We are not aware that the distinction ever obtained any footing in our modern English science, until the time of Coleridge, who in several of his works has striven *pugnis et calcibus* to instal it into our philosophical terminology. "The understanding," says Kant, "is the faculty judging according to sense." "Reason," says Coleridge, "is the power of universal and necessary convictions, the source and substance of truths above sense, and having their evidence in themselves."‡ Resuming, then, the thread which we

\* Kritik d. R. V., pp. 23—43.

† Ibid., p. 19.

‡ Even in German, this distinction between *Verstand* and *Vernunft* was not always recognised. See a philological analysis of the latter term in Herder's *Meta-kritik*, vol. ii., p. 11. See Kritik d. R. V. Elementari., ii. Th., ii. Abth., i. Buch.

have dropped, the Prussian philosopher dissected the cognitive subject or soul into three distinct faculties: viz. 1st. Sense, or Sensibility. 2d. Understanding. 3d. Reason.

Sense receives and works up the multiform material, and brings it to consciousness. This it accomplishes partly as a mere "receptivity," passively accepting sensations, and partly as an active power of spontaneity. The understanding is a step higher than sense. What sense has apprehended, the understanding takes up, and by its synthetizing activity (*die synthetisirende Thätigkeit*), presents under certain forms or conditions, which, by a term borrowed from logic, are called categories. These are twelve, classified under the heads of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Modality. Of Quantity: 1. Unity; 2. Plurality; 3. Totality. Of Quality: 4. Affirmation, or Reality; 5. Negation, or Privation; 6. Limitation. Of Relation: 7. Substance and Accident; 8. Cause and Effect; 9. Action and Reaction. Of Modality: 10. Possibility and Impossibility; 11. Existence and Non-Existence; 12. Necessity and Contingency.\* Whatsoever now the understanding takes cognizance of, it knows under some of these forms; and every intelligence receives the object as connected with at least four of these categories at once, from the four different classes. Kant attributed to the understanding the function of reducing multiplicity to unity. The result of this reduction to unity, in our consciousness, is a conception (*Begriff*). All possible conceptions are produced under the twelve categories as their necessary forms. These are therefore the conditions of all thought; yet they afford no knowledge of the objects *per se*; and have not the slightest significancy independent of time and space. Time and space are the ways or forms under which objects are made sensible; and the categories are the ways or forms under which the same objects are understood (*begriffen*).

The reason, finally, is the sublime of human spontaneity. It takes cognizance of that which is self-evident, necessary, absolute, infinite, eternal. Its objects are beyond the sphere, not merely of time and space, but of all ratiocination: and it is among these objects, "above the stir and smoke of this dim spot which men call earth," that the transcendental philosophers have most successfully expatiated. While the understanding is discursive, and collects proof, and deduces judgments, referring to other faculties as its authority, the reason is self-sufficient, intuitive, immediate and infallible in all its dictates. In the pure reason, there reside, *a priori*, three ideas, viz. 1. Of that which is absolute and of itself, whether subjective or objective; the former being the theme of psychology, the latter of ontology. 2. Of a supreme and independent real cause of all that is; namely, of God: this being the object of theology. 3. Of an absolute totality of all phenomena; namely, the universe, *τὸ πᾶν*; being the object of cosmology.

\* *Kritik der reinen, v., p. 78.*



The eagerness of the philosophical public to discover how these principles might legitimately affect the interests of ethics and theology, led Kant to publish, in 1787, his *Critique of Practical Reason*. In this, as in several other similar works indicated in our volume for 1828, he declared himself, to a certain extent; still leaving it a matter of dispute among his adherents whether he was a Deist or a Christian. His adversaries assert that his argument for the being of a God is inconsistent with his system, and unworthy of being admitted; and even his friends admit that he never gave his assent to the supernatural origin of Christianity. Nothing, however, in the whole system is more striking than the foundation which it gives to morals; for here, and nowhere else, Kant forsakes the character of a mere critic, and lays down absolute and final dictates of reason. There is, he teaches, an original and invariable law, residing in the depths of human consciousness, and commanding what is right. This he calls the categorical imperative. It urges man to act virtuously, even at the expense of happiness. Translated into words, it runs thus, "Act in such a manner, that the maxim of your will may be valid in all circumstances, as a principle of universal legislation."\* Proceeding from this he builds his natural theology on his ethics; argues the necessity of another life and an almighty and omniscient Judge. The three "postulates of the Practical Reason," are God, freedom, and immortality.† It is now, we believe, generally conceded, that these moral and theological speculations are an after-thought, a supplement to the main structure, and scarcely worthy of reverence for their consistency, however interesting as proofs of the strong leaning of their author towards the faith of his childhood. It was the desire of Kant to appear favourable to Christianity. At his day infidelity had not grown so bold as it has since done; and it is especially worthy of consideration, that whenever Kant speaks of the Divine Being, he distinctly conveys the idea of a personal God, objectively existing, separate from nature, and independent of the cognizance of finer spirits.‡

It deserves to be noticed that Kant, in pursuance of his vocation as a critical rather than a constructive philosopher, did not attribute to reason those divine and active powers which later philosophers have assumed, and which are claimed for her by some of our American imitators, who, we would gladly believe, are

\* Handle so dass die Maxime deines Willens jederzeit zugleich als Princip einer allgemeinen Gesetzgebung gelten koenne. *Kritik der Practischen Vernunft*. 5te Aufl. Leipz., 1818, p. 54.

† *Kritik d. P. V.* p. 213, ff.

‡ Those who choose to pursue this subject further will find satisfaction in the following works, viz. Kant's *Religion innerhalb der Ideen d. Menschl. Vernunft*, 2te Aufl. 1762, and the reply to it, by Sartorius. *Die Religion ausserhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, u. s. w. Marburg, 1822. In this work (p. 62), he quotes from Vincent, the following observation, which is not here out of place: "Who can refrain from a smile, at beholding Christ and his apostles brought into the train of philosophy, and made successively Wolfians, Crusians, Kantians, Fichteans, and Schellingians!"

ignorant of the apotheosis of reason which they thus subserve. The genuine Kantians have always maintained that in what their master delivered concerning the absolute and the infinite, he simply meant to attribute to pure reason the power of directing the cognitive energy beyond its nearer objects, and to extend its research indefinitely; but by no means to challenge for this power the direct intuition of the absolute, as the veritable object of infallible insight.

The chief objection which was made to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and to the other works of the same author, was that they were purposely obscure; and it cannot be denied, that in addition to the inherent intricacy of the subject, the reader is greatly perplexed by a multiplicity of new-coined words, and still more by an arbitrary wresting of familiar terms to meanings remote from their common acceptation. It is partly for this reason, that Kant, like another great innovator of the age, Jeremy Bentham, has been best represented by the pens of his disciples; and that aid which Bentham owed to Dumont, was afforded to Kant by Schulze, a chaplain of the king of Prussia.\* This writer acknowledges, however, that at the time when he wrote, that is in 1791, the diction of his master still remained a hieroglyphic to the public.† In 1798, when Coleridge was in Germany, he heard much the same statement from the venerable Klopstock. "He said the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible; that he had often been pestered by the Kantians, but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it, and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do, by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion."‡ Coleridge, however, declares that in that very year almost all the professors in Germany were either Kantians, or disciples of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantian; and in the twelfth chapter of the work just cited, he vindicates Kant from the charges of needless obscurity. At the same time he tells us that the disciples, during their master's lifetime, quarrelled about the meaning of his dicta, and that the old philosopher used to reply to their appeals: "I meant what I said, and at the age of near four score, I have something else and more important to do, than to write a commentary on my own works."

In spite of this obscurity, however, the Critical Philosophy assumed the empire in the German universities; but not without opposition from the highest sources. The celebrated John George Hamann uttered a touching caveat against the irreligious tendency of Kant's system. He declared, in his letters to Jacobi, and else-

\* *Erläuterungen ueber des Herrn Professor Kant Kritik der reinen Vernunft*: von Johann Schulze, u. s. w. Koenigsberg, 1791.

† Schulze, p. 6.

‡ *Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii., p. 160, N. Y. edition.

where, that the new philosophy owed many of its deductions to a mere play on words, and perplexed its readers in a maze of unwonted expressions; that the Kantian *τὸ ὄν* was a mere conception, of which the objective existence or non-existence could not be determined by reason. He warned the student of philosophy against a system of delusion, in which man is made everything and God is made nothing; a warning infinitely more appropriate as applied to the systems which have succeeded Kant, and which are proffered to the credulous complaisance of the American public.\* In 1799 the still more celebrated Herder entered the field as an antagonist, in his *Metakritik*.† Like Hamann, he brings the charge of perplexed language, and the misunderstanding and abuse of abstractions. He characterises the Critique of Pure Reason in general, as transcendental mist (transcendentalen Dunst), a fog of fine-spun verbiage (nebelichtes Wortgespinnst), calculated by means of dialectical sorcery to confound the very implement of reason, namely, language. The attention of the reader is the rather called to this judgment, as it is common to attribute the obscurity of our philosopher to some accidents of his vernacular tongue, rather than to his own phraseology; but here is the verdict of a German, a scholar, a philosopher, and a pupil of his own. If space were allowed, we might go much further, and dilate upon the denunciation of the Kantian idealism, by a number of eminent men, such as Garve, Eberhard, Tiedemann, Tittel, Nicolai, and Jacobi: of whom the first two were formally answered by Kant, while the last is the sole representative of a system which founds all philosophy in an affectionate religious faith, independent of revelation.‡

But it is time we should leave Kant, and consider his great successor. John Theophilus Fichte, who was born in 1762, and died in 1814, is thought by the initiated to have carried philosophy forward from its critical towards its scientific condition. He was familiar with Kant, and wrote in his manner, so that his first important work, published in 1792, was attributed to the great master. Kant had set out with a critical analysis of understanding, reason, and judgment. Some of his followers, especially Reinhold, had started with the phenomenon of consciousness. Fichte simplified a step further, and began, not with a thing or a faculty, but an act. Fichte, say his admirers, leaves us at the apex of the pyramid.§ True enough, but then the pyramid is upside down: the apex and support being the monosyllable I. The notion of a thought which is its own object, and the notion of I, are identical. The *Ego* looks

\* Jacobi's Schriften, vol. i., 1781, pp. 371—390; vol. iv., p. 31. Goethe's Dichtung und Wahrheit; Werke, vol. xxvi.

† Verstand und Erfahrung: eine Metakritik zur Kritik d. r. Vernunft; von J. G. Herder, Leipzig, 1799.

‡ See Jacobi von den Göttlichen Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung, 2te Aufl. Leipzig, 1822; see also Rixner's Handbuch d. Geschichte d. Philosophie; Sulzbach, 1829, vol. iii., § 143, 144.

§ See a similar expression in Mr. Linberg's note to Cousin's Introduction, p. 455.



at itself; and thus we have the idea of *Ego* as knowing, and *Ego* as known, the intelligent and the existent I. This *Ego*, absolute and free, has regard to an object, or *Non-Ego*: it creates this *Non-Ego* by its own activity: in a word, it creates objective nature.\* The whole of the Fichtean philosophy is a following out of this track. It creates the world out of the mind's act; and it regards the outward universe as nothing but a limit of our being, on which thought operates; a limit, moreover, springing from the mind's creative power.† In such a system as this, what place is found for the Great Author of the universe? Fichte replies, that the being of the Godhead (which he holds to be identical with the active and moral *ordo mundi*) is an object not of theoretical knowledge, but of rational faith; and that this faith is purely moral. On a certain occasion, we are told by Madame de Staël, he said to his auditors that in the following lecture he would proceed to create God; an expression in perfect harmony with his principle, but one which gave just offence to the public. "According to Fichte," says Cousin, in his Introduction to the History of Philosophy, "God is nothing but the subject of thought conceived as absolute: he is therefore still the I. But as it is repugnant to human thought, that the I of man, which might indeed be transferred into nature, should be imposed upon God, Fichte distinguished between a twofold I, the one phenomenal, namely, the I which each of us represents; the other is itself the substance of the I, namely, God himself. God is the absolute I."‡ Even Coleridge, who regarded Fichte as giving the first idea of a system truly metaphysical, admits that it "degenerated into a crude egoismus, a boastful and hyperstoic hostility to NATURE, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy; while his religion consisted in the assumption of a mere ORDO ORDINANS, which we were permitted *exoterice* to call God."§

In a seeming ecstasy of admiration, the translator of Cousin's Introduction says of this system: "Fichte has, in arriving at this point, indeed reached the very summit of the pyramid of human science; and if the man lives, or has lived, who has as yet discovered a flaw in the chain of reasoning which leads to this point, I am ignorant of the fact."|| It may be observed of many of the

\* That our syntax, as well as our philosophy, is becoming a new affair, may be seen from the following specimen of Dr. Henry's English: "The fundamental fact of consciousness is a complex phenomenon, composed of three terms: first, the *me* and the *not me*," &c.—Introduction, p. 20. Now, if we must have nonsense, we feel that it is our privilege, as descendants of Englishmen, to have it in good grammar. Apropos of this, we find some of our contemporaries quoting Plato in Cousin's version: surely our scholarship must be near its ebb! If the Greek is absolutely unintelligible, and if we have neither Sydenham nor Taylor, let us get a friend to English it for us. It is quite in the style of the French pulpit, when we find Dr. Henry citing the Vulgate (page 22). "It is the *Logos*, the *WORD* of St. John, which 'lighteth every man that cometh into the world:' 'illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum.'" The reader must be left to divine why Dr. Henry here quotes Latin.

† Biographie Universelle, vol. xiv., p. 486. Rixner, vol. iii., p. 337, ff.

‡ Linberg's Translation, p. 398.

§ Biographia Literaria, vol. i., p. 95.

|| Cousin's Introduction, by Linberg. Boston, 1832, p. 454-5.

systems with which it is sought to render our youth gradually familiar, that at the first approach they have a horrid aspect of atheism; but that the adepts have the most ingenious method imaginable of correcting this impression. There is probably not a Pantheist in America who will own the name; nor is there a greater certainty concerning things future, than that the free ingress of transcendentalism will smooth the way for the denial of all that we adore and love in the august idea of God. Fichte was at first reputed to be an atheist; and one of his works was instantly confiscated with rigour throughout all Saxony. As is usual in such cases, he and his abettors wrote appeals and apologies. Herder, then vice-president of the Weimar consistory, took part against him. All Germany rang with the quarrel. It was at this memorable crisis that Schelling arose in opposition to Fichte, in behalf of a system still more transcendental; of which more hereafter. He became the fashionable philosopher of Jena, for there are fashions in philosophy, especially in Germany. Poor Fichte fought as he could, but the public having tasted a more intoxicating beverage, could not return to the flatter metaphysics. Fichte is supposed to have advanced in his later years to a more consistent idealism. He always declared that the Kantians did not comprehend their master's system: we believe as much ourselves: but he added, that in the new system of idealism he was only giving consistent development to the principles of Kant.

It was reserved for other hands to complete the structure; or if we acknowledge that the pyramid was now complete, it afforded a test for the flight of more consistent, or more adventurous minds, into the transcendental empyrean. It was Frederick William Joseph Schelling, who, to use the phrases of his admirers, brought philosophy to its perfection, as the science of the Absolute. Kant had scrutinized the cognitive subject, and determined, except in regard to the moral imperative, that absolute knowledge is unattainable. Fichte followed him, and out of the productive Ego created the objective world, still giving countenance, however, to the figment of a seeming dualism, and discriminating between the thinker and that which is thought. But Schelling, with a boldness unequalled in every previous attempt, merged all in one, and declared as the great discovery of the age, and first truth of absolute wisdom, that subject and object are one, that the Ego and Non-Ego are identical. Knowledge and Being are no longer different. His system was, therefore, expressively called the system of identity, or the philosophy of the absolute.\*

Here, as in a former case, we ask what place is left for the Most High? Schelling is at no loss for an answer. God is in truth the very object of all philosophy; but it is God revealing himself in the universe. The divine being, once hidden, has a perpetual tendency to self-revelation; a process of evolution which is for ever

\* Rixner, vol. iii., § 167.

going onward, and producing the world, or nature. It is this development which we see and feel, and of which we are a part. The universe, therefore, becomes as important a portion of the philosophy of Schelling, as that of the ancient Gnostics, or of Spinoza.\* We do not wish to be understood as comprehending this profane modification of atheism, for we almost tremble while we write; we will not say the notions, but the expressions of men who treat of the genesis of divinity as coolly as Hesiod of the birth of gods: yet we will proceed. In the absolute philosophy, God is a principle, not personal, but tending to personality, becoming personal (*eine werdende Personlichkeit*); a tendency manifested in, and producing, the phenomena of the universe. This eternal development is a mighty effort towards self-consciousness; and the consciousness of human reason is indeed the consciousness of God; a state in which the absolute spirit views itself.†

This, we need scarcely say, is a highly flattering illusion to the soaring mind. The infinite chasm between heaven and earth is no more. Human action is the action of the infinite. Man can know the infinite by immediate insight, because he is himself infinite. God is all things, and all things are God: we are ourselves in God and God in us. And here the happy language of a writer in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1829, whose article on Cousin is highly praised and largely quoted by Dr. Henry, may be cited by us, though with an intention very different from that of the latter. "In this act of knowledge, which, after Fichte, Schelling calls the Intellectual Intuition, there exists no distinction of subject and object—no contrast of knowledge and existence—all difference is lost in absolute indifference—all plurality in absolute unity. The intuition itself—reason—and the absolute—are identical. The absolute exists only as known by reason, and reason knows only as being itself the absolute."‡ As a natural consequence, this direct cognition of the absolute, the unconditioned, and the infinite, implies the annihilation of consciousness; for it is of the very essence of consciousness to conceive of the object of thought as separate from its

\* In the new philosophy there is little reference had to the distinction between matter and spirit; in this respect the grand error of the ancient Greeks reappears, and the inevitable result is an inextricable tangle of physics with metaphysics. Material images are always dangerous aids in the philosophy of the mind; but the Germans are so far from being aware of this, that a large part of their statements are merely transformation of sensible images into expressions of pure thought. By running away with analogies, a puerile imagination may see resemblances between material and immaterial objects, which a puerile judgment may stamp as verities. Hence, in the system of Schelling, galvanism, electricity, and magnetism, have place in the very midst of psychology. Hence, in the system of Cousin, expansion and concentration become elements of mental analysis. Hence, also, England being an island, her philosophers cannot be transcendental. The ridiculous passage in which this truly French statement is conveyed, is too striking to be omitted: "England, gentlemen," says M. Cousin, "is a very considerable island; in England everything stops at certain limits; nothing is there developed on a great scale."—Introduction, p. 350.

† See Bretschneider, *Ueber die Grundansichten der Theologischen Systeme der Proff. Schleiermacher und Marheineke*. Leipzig, 1823, p. 5.

‡ *Edinburgh Review*, Oct., 1829, Art. xi., p. 208.



subject. It is a further consequence that there can be no personal immortality of the soul; the hope of which he characterizes as a vain solace (eitle Freude):\* in return for which fond illusion, Schelling cheers us with an immortality in which the qualities of the soul re-enter into the universal mass: "An immortality," says Madame de Staël, "which terribly resembles death: since physical death itself is nothing but universal nature reclaiming the gifts she had made to the individual."†

Such is the philosophy which up to this very hour is taught in several of the German universities by Protestant teachers of religion, and to which, more alarming still, a goodly number among our neophytes in metaphysics are endeavouring to attain. But M. Cousin somewhat sneers at our apprehension of the "bugbear" Pantheism, and we may yet be called upon by American clergymen to abandon all belief in a personal God, or any Deity but the universe. It is very true, as we shall see, that M. Cousin does not avow himself to be a disciple of Schelling. It is further true that he diverges from him in important particulars, and earnestly, though, as we think, vainly, endeavours to wrest his own system into a conformity with revelation; yet his whole scheme is a conduit from the stream of German transcendentalism at the most corrupt part of its current; and his works abound with expressions which savour too strongly of doctrines more *prononcées* than those which he has avowed. In the following sentences we know not to what school he can allude, if not to that of Schelling, Oken, or Hegel:‡ "Fichte died in 1815, and even before his death, a new philosophy, unable to stop at the system of absolute subjectivity, and the summit of the pyramid of the me, has re-descended to the earth, and returned to nearer views of actual reality. The contemporaneous German philosophy, which now exerts as great an influence, and possesses as high an authority in Germany, as ever did that of Kant or Fichte, bears the title of the philosophy of nature. The title alone indicates some return towards reality."§

We have sometimes been strongly tempted to suspect that many of the enthusiastic admirers of Coleridge's prose works are entirely unaware of the extremes to which their master's principle of philosophizing would legitimately lead them. None can be more open than ourselves to impressions from the great genius and inimitable diction of this philosopher and poet; we have felt its fascinations, and in hanging over his pages, and especially his noble denunciations of the utilitarian ethics, we have almost forgotten how indeterminate and fruitless are most of his reasonings, and how rotten the foundation of his scheme. After our declaration that the system of Schelling is a system of Pantheism, or that sort of Atheism which denies the personality of God, many will be startled when

\* Bretschneider, *ubi supra*, p. 12.

† De l'Allemagne, t. iii., p. 114, ed. Paris, 1814.

‡ Cousin's Introduction to Hist. of Philosophy, p. 427. Boston.

§ The title of one of Schelling's works, *Ideen zur Naturphilosophie*; 1797.

we assure them that Coleridge maintained the great principles of this very school. We disclaim indeed the intention of representing this learned man as having coincided with the German Pantheist in all the remote consequences of his theory, however legitimate. But that the system of Coleridge and the system of Schelling are the same in their leading principles will be denied by no one who is familiar with both. Nay, we have Coleridge himself making the most ample avowal of this coincidence, for the purpose, as it should seem, of escaping the charge of plagiarism from the German philosopher. Let us hear himself: "In Schelling's '*Natur-Philosophie*,' and the '*System des Transcendentalen Idealismus*,' I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do." And then, as if to account for the somewhat singular fact that the dissertation in the "*Biographie Litteraire*," on the reciprocal relations of the *esse* and the *cogitare*, is a literal translation from the Introduction to a work of Schelling, he proceeds to say:\* "We had studied in the same school; been disciplined by the same preparatory philosophy, namely, that of Kant; we had both equal obligations to the polar logic and dynamic philosophy of Giordano Bruno," &c., &c. And again: "To me it will be happiness and honour enough, should I succeed in rendering the system itself intelligible to my countrymen, and in the application of it to the most awful of subjects for the most important of purposes."† After reading these avowals, and after having learned the ravages of this very philosophy among the present generation of clergymen in Germany, we are heartily thankful that Coleridge never summoned sufficient energy to give us anything more than fragments; while we are filled with amazement at the sight of Christian ministers among ourselves, men of education and piety, either subscribing to statements which they do not comprehend, or giving the weight of their authority to the conclusions which by the best theologians even of Germany are denounced as incompatible with the fundamentals, we say not of Christianity, but of natural religion. Let our young metaphysicians learn from Coleridge and Cousin to tolerate and admire Schelling, and they will soon learn from Schelling himself that God is everything.‡

\* This seeming plagiarism is set in the best light of which the facts admit, in the preface to the "*Specimens of the Table Talk*," New York, 1835, p. 25, ff. But the whole vindictory argument is singular in the history of literary borrowing. See, on the same topic, the *British Magazine* for January, 1835.

† *Biographie Litteraire*, vol. i., pp. 95, 97. The reader, in order to do justice, at once, to us, in bringing so grave a charge, and to the memory of Coleridge, should not fail to consult the work here cited. On page 169 will be found this pregnant declaration: "We begin with the *I know myself* in order to end with the absolute *I am*. We proceed from the self, in order to lose and find all self in God." See also "The Friend," Essay xiii., p. 76, note; likewise p. 451, ed. Burlington, 1831; likewise "*Aids to Reflection*," note 50, p. 284, ed. 1829.

‡ In all that we have written about Schelling, we have had reference to his published systems. What changes have taken place in his way of thinking within the last ten years, we have not been in a situation to know. It is, however, said that he has abandoned some of his anti-Christian notions.

We almost shrink from the attempt to conduct our readers any lower down in the circling vaults of German wisdom ; we have not yet reached the end, for in the lowest deep a lower deep still opens wide, in the system of Hegel and his followers.\* When we speak of this professor, we shall not be scrupulous in distinguishing between his own opinions and those of his immediate and acknowledged followers ; and, this being premised, it may be said that his was the system prevailing in Germany on the arrival of the last steamer.

George Frederick William Hegel was born in 1770, and died within the last three or four years. He was professor, first at Jena, and afterwards at Heidelberg and at Berlin ; in the last of which chairs he succeeded Fichte, in 1818. His system purported to be an improvement on that of Schelling. It is said by the Hegelians, that in contradistinction from that of Fichte, which was a subjective idealism, and from that of Schelling, which was an objective idealism, the scheme of Hegel takes the true position as an absolute idealism.† Hegel, no less than Schelling, maintained universal identity, or that all things are the same : but while the former postulated this as an intellectual intuition, the latter proceeded to prove it by a scientific process.‡ Both teach, but with the same difference as to the origin of the dogma, that thought and being are identical. In his earliest work, Hegel undertook to show how the I, through manifold and multiform self-evolutions, comes to be, first, Consciousness, then Self-Consciousness, then Reason, and, finally, Self-Comprehending and Religious Spirit.§

All philosophy, according to Hegel, is but an attempt to answer a simple question, viz., *Quid est ?* And the answer to this involves all Truth, all Reason : for whatever is, is Reason. All reality is reasonable, all that is reasonable is real. Hence the only real existence is the ideas of Reason. All reality (*Wirklichkeit*) being thoroughly rational, is also divine ; yea, is God revealing himself or developing himself. Nature is God coming to self-consciousness.|| God reveals himself in creation, or in the universe, by a series of eternal unfoldings, some in matter, some in mind ; and thus the Deity is in a perpetual effort towards self-realization.¶ The history of Physics is, therefore, the necessary career of divine self-evolution ; indeed, God thinks worlds, just as the mind thinks thoughts.

In order to philosophize aright, we must lose our own personality in God, who is chiefly revealed in the acts of the human mind. In the infinite developments of divinity, and the infinite progress toward self-consciousness, the greatest success is reached

\* Io sono al *terzo cerchio* della piovra

Eterna, maladetta, fredda, e greve.

Dante, *Inferno*, Canto vi.

† Conversations-Lexikon, Art. Hegel.

‡ Rixner, vol. iii., p. 437. Marheineke : *Dogmatik*, §§ 1—68.

§ Die *Phaenomenologie des Geistes*, Bamberg, 1807.

|| Baur : *Christl. Gnosis*, p. 672.

¶ Rixner, p. 444.



in the exertions of human reason. In men's minds, therefore, is the highest manifestation of God. God recognises himself best in human reason, which is a consciousness of God (Gottesbewusstseyn). And it is by human reason that the world (hitherto without thought, and so without existence, mere negation) comes into consciousness; thus God is revealed in the world.\*

God is the Idea of all Ideas, or the absolute Idea: hence our ideal thought is divine thought, and this is no other than reason.† “The doctrine of the being of God is no other than that of the revelation of himself in the Idea of him.”‡ “God exists only as knowledge (Wissen); in this knowledge, and as such, he knows himself, and it is this very knowledge which is his existence.”§ We may therefore say with truth God exists as an Idea.||

After thus arriving at an ideal God, we learn that Philosophy and Religion draw us away from our little selves, so that our separate consciousness is dissolved in that of God. Philosophy is Religion; and “true Religion frees man from all that is low, and from himself, from clinging to I-hood (Ichheit) and subjectivity, and helps him to life in God as the Truth, and thereby to true life.”¶ In this oblation of personal identity, we must not claim property even in our own thoughts. By a step beyond Emmonism, Hegel teaches that it is God who thinks in us; nay, that it is precisely that which thinks in us, which is God. Marheineke himself manifests tokens of alarm, when he states this doctrine.\*\* The pure and primal substance manifests itself as the subject; and “true knowledge of the absolute is the absolute itself.” There is but a step to take, and we arrive at the tenet, that the universe and God are one.†† The Hegelians attempt to distinguish this from the doctrine of Spinoza, but their distinctions are inappreciable; ‘tis the same rope at either end they twist:’ their scheme is Pantheism. And as God is revealed by all the phenomena of the world's history, he is partly revealed by moral action, and consequently by sin, no less than by holiness. Sin is, therefore, a part of the necessary evolution of the divine principle; or rather, in any sense

\* Marheineke, *Dogmatik*, § 229. ff. Bretschneider, u. s., p. 49.

† Bretschneider, u. s., p. 40.

‡ Marheineke, § 147, p. 87.

§ Marheineke, § 153, as cited by Bretschneider; but in our edition, the third, these words do not occur, but we read “Das Seyn Gottes also ist selbst noch etwas anders, als dessen Bestimmtheit selber oder das Wissen.” It will not seem strange to any one familiar with the present condition of philosophy, that we cite Marheineke as an authentic expounder of Hegel; it is just so to regard him, and we may presume that those points of the system which are anti-christian will, to say the least, not be exaggerated by a theological professor.

|| Marheineke, *Dogmatik*, § 174, *apud* Bretschneider's *Grundansichten*, p. 43.

¶ Bretschneider, p. 45. Marheineke, p. 53. See also Hegel's *Encyklopaedie*, p. 593. ff. Baur's *Gnosis*, p. 672.

\*\* *Dogmatik*, p. 67.

†† Bretschneider, *Grundansichten*, p. 50. Rixner, himself a devotee to this German Buddhism, cites what follows: “The knowledge of the absolute identity of God and the Universe (des Alls) is *Reason*: the crown and perfection of self-recognising and self-comprehending Reason is philosophy.”—Vol. iii., p. 392.

which can affect the conscience, there is no evil in sin—there is no sin. This is a part of the philosophy of Hegel, which has given great pain to pious men in Germany, who have repeatedly complained of it as subverting the first principles of morality, not merely in theory but in practice; and begetting a fatalism which threatens alike the foundations of religion and of state. A late pantheistic poet teaches us, that all which we regard as sin, is necessary, and therefore good, and may, to other intelligences, justly appear most lovely!\*. But there are conclusions of the new philosophy still more surprising, for which our inchoate metaphysicians should be getting ready. It is well said by an acute writer already quoted, that when, according to the demands of Schelling, we annihilate first the object, and then the subject, the remainder is zero.† Though Schelling is not known to have admitted this, his critics were not slow to perceive it. Schulze, in particular, declared that, according to his system, Everything is Nothing, and Nothing is Everything;‡ and Köppen called this the philosophy of Absolute Nothing. It was reserved for Hegel to abandon all the scruples of six thousand years, and publish the discovery—certainly the most wonderful in the history of human research—that Something and Nothing are the same! In declaring it, he almost apologizes, for he says, that this proposition appears so paradoxical, that it may readily be supposed that it is not seriously maintained.§ Yet he is far from being ambiguous. Something and nothing are the same. The Absolute of which so much is vaunted is nothing.|| But the conclusion which is, perhaps, already anticipated by the reader's mind, and which leaves us incapacitated for comment, is this—we shudder while we record it—that after the exhaustive abstraction is carried to infinity in search of God, we arrive at nothing.¶ God himself is nothing!

The German philosophy was first made known to the French by the *Allemagne* of Madame de Staël. It attracted some attention as an extravaganza of the German mind, but it made few proselytes until it was taken up by M. Cousin. It was in the year 1816 that he first commenced the importation of the German metaphysics. He had been at that time recently appointed assistant Professor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Literature at Paris. He continued to lecture until 1820, when he incurred the disapprobation of the French government, and his lectures were suspended. In 1827, he was restored to the exercise of his functions as a Pro-

\* Schefer.

† *Edinb. Rev.*, Oct. 1829, p. 208.

‡ Schulze's *Aphorismen*, p. 141 of Rixner.

§ Hegel's *Encyclopædie*, 3te Ausg., p. 103. "Seyn und Nichts ist dasselbe."

|| *Ib.*, p. 101.

¶ *Ib.*, p. 102. ff. The same is expressly taught by Marheineke, *Dozmatik*, § 125, and as our allegation is too important to be left without evidence, here are his words: "In dieser Unbestimmtheit ist Gott das Gedankenlose, die noch in sich selbst beharrende, unmittelbare Einheit des Seyns und Nichts; und kann Alles, was von Gott bejaht wird, ebenso sehr verneint werden."

fessor of the Faculty of Literature, and continued to lecture until 1832, when he was made a Peer of France.\*

The principal original works which M. Cousin has published are his Introduction to the History of Philosophy, comprising the course of Lectures delivered by him in 1828; and the History of Philosophy of the 18th Century, containing his Lectures for 1829. His other contributions to philosophy have been given in the form of prefaces and notes to various translations which he has published. The first of the above named works has been translated for us by Mr. Linberg; and Dr. Henry has translated and published, under the title of Elements of Psychology, that part of the other which contains M. Cousin's criticisms upon the philosophy of Locke.

It would be difficult to define precisely how far the philosophical system which Dr. Henry is seeking to domiciliate among us, agrees with the mis-shapen phantasies which we have brought before the notice of our readers. When language has ceased to be the representative of ideas, it is not easy to tell what are intended to be equivalent forms of speech. M. Cousin, moreover, professes to discard the phraseology of Kant, even where he adopts his ideas, and deprives us thus far of the means of recognition. But unhappily we do not find that the "way in which men express themselves in France" is any more intelligible than the dialect of "Königsberg." Even Mr. Linberg, "the accomplished translator" and admirer of Cousin, finds it difficult occasionally to understand what M. Cousin precisely means,† and M. Cousin himself now and then betrays an obscure consciousness of having "reached a height, where he is, as it were, out of sight of land."‡

We are farther embarrassed in the interpretation of his system, by the material consideration, that no full exposition of it has as yet been given to the world. Though it is now twenty-three years since he "first faltered the name of Eclecticism," and entered upon the establishment of a new school in philosophy, we are still left to gather its principles as they lie scattered in Fragments, Prefaces, Programmes of Lectures, and Historical Criticisms. While the system has only this fragmentary existence, it is too early to pronounce of it, as Dr. Henry does, "that it is a distinct scientific theory, having its method, its principle, and its consequences."§

\* Dr. Henry, who seems anxious to give his readers an exalted idea of the philosophic temperament of M. Cousin, says, that "he rarely speaks in the Chamber of Peers—that he takes part in the discussions of that body only where some question relating to public instruction is before the Chamber; or on extremely rare occasions, when no good citizen should keep silence." Dr. Henry calculates rather largely upon the ignorance of his readers as to the transactions and debates of the French Chamber of Peers. We need only refer, in illustration of the philosophic elevation of M. Cousin, to one of the most disgraceful scenes that ever occurred in any legislative body, in which this gentleman, in the course of a debate upon the question of Spanish intervention, gave the *lie direct* to Count Molé, one of the ministry.

† Cousin's Introd., p. 450.

‡ Cousin's Introd., p. 123.

§ Dr. Henry may have sources of information that are not open to the public. He



We do not feel ourselves competent to decide upon the coherency and completeness of a system of philosophy, which has as yet received only a partial development "in its applications, by history and criticism;" nor are we willing to defer in this matter to the judgment of Dr. Henry, unless some of the letters of M. Cousin "to the present translator" contain a more full and systematic exposition of the principles of eclecticism, than is to be found in his published writings. There seems to be evidence that the translator has gained light from some quarter during the interval between the two editions of his work. In the first, when he had received no letters from M. Cousin, he says, "we come now to an important point—the fundamental peculiarity of M. Cousin's system; this is the two-fold development of reason." He then proceeds to explain the distinction between the spontaneous and reflective reason, which he again tells us, "constitutes and determines the peculiar system of M. Cousin."\* But in his second edition we are told that it is "M. Cousin's attempt to fix the infinite as a positive in knowledge, which constitutes the chief and fundamental peculiarity of his system."† And again he says, "the position taken by Cousin upon this subject (the positive idea of the infinite) constitutes the chief pretension and systematic peculiarity of his philosophy."‡

The applications of M. Cousin's philosophy are to us, however, more valuable than the scientific exposition of his principles. The formulas of transcendentalism are in most cases, as Berkeley styled the vanishing ratios of the modern mathematical analysis, "the mere ghosts of departed quantities;" but when the truths which they are supposed to contain are applied to morals and religion, they assume a more substantial form. Here at least we can try the spirits by the test of what we already know to be true. Our only elements for a judgment upon the trackless path of German philosophy are afforded by its line of direction while within the scope of our vision.

We class M. Cousin with the German school, because the chief part of his philosophy, as far as he has developed it incidentally in its applications to history and criticism, is evidently derived from that source. In a passage already cited by us, he avows his sympathy with a particular contemporary school in Germany, in terms which draw all regards to his personal friend Hegel, and to those of his followers who have attempted to bridge over the gulf between transcendental chaos and the world we live in; and every page of his works shows that he has been "plunged in the womb

has taken care not to leave his readers ignorant that he is in correspondence with M. Cousin. It was hardly necessary to inform the public that he was "indebted to M. Cousin himself for a copy" of the highly eulogistic memoir, from which he has compiled his biographical notices of this philosopher.

\* Elements of Psychology, 1st edition, pp. 21 and 22.

† Elements of Psychology, p. 31.

‡ Elements of Psychology, p. 110.

of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild." But mindful of the famous saying of Fontenelle, he has opened just as many fingers of his handful of truth as he finds convenient. He glories in the name of Eclectic, and claims to be the founder of a new school which is to comprehend and supersede all others. "Our philosophy," he says, "is not a gloomy and fanatical philosophy, which being pre-possessed with a few exclusive ideas, undertakes to reform all others upon the same model: it is a philosophy essentially optimistic, whose only end is to comprehend all, and which, therefore, accepts and reconciles all."\* It is a fundamental position with M. Cousin that every form of belief that has existed contains within it some truth, and he seems to be equally strong in the faith, that in his philosophical alembic every creed will part with its error. He finds in the 18th century four philosophical schools which he designates as the Sensual, the Ideal, the Sceptical, and the Mystical. Each of these schools has existed, and therefore truth is to be found in each, and can only be entirely obtained by effecting a composition between them all. But where are we to find the test that will separate the elements of truth and error combined in each of these systems? And where the principle of unity which is to group together the particular truths disengaged from each? These can only be found in a new system. But this system, according to M. Cousin's reasoning, as it exists in common with many others, can contain only a portion of truth, and the skimming process must be applied to this in common with the rest. We see no end to this method of exhaustions. M. Cousin's philosophy has in truth no better claim to the name and character of eclectic than any other system. It accepts what agrees with its own principles, and rejects what does not, and this is precisely what every other system does.

If further evidence were wanting of the affectation and charlatantry of this title, it might be abundantly found in the additional reasons which M. Cousin assigns for assuming it. One of these is that consciousness demands eclecticism. And the case is thus made out. "Being, the me, and the not-me, are the three indestructible elements of consciousness: not only do we find them in the actual development of consciousness, but we find them in the first facts of consciousness as in the last; and so intimately are they combined with each other, that if you destroy but one of these three elements you destroy all the rest. There you behold eclecticism within the limits of consciousness, in its elements, which are all equally real, but which, to form a psychological theory, need all to be combined with each other.† Another reason is that "even logic demands eclecticism," for all systems of logic turn either upon the idea of cause, or that of substance; and from the alternate neglect of one or other of these ideas, we have the "two great

\* *Introduct. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 416.

† *Introduct. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 418.

systems which, at the present day, are distinguished by the names of theism and pantheism." Of these systems, the author adds, that "both the one and the other are equally exclusive and false."\* Hence even logic demands eclecticism. But the most amusing argument which M. Cousin urges in behalf of eclecticism is that which he draws from the spirit and tendencies of the age. We cannot follow him through it, as it is spread over seventeen octavo pages. He rejects from consideration England and Scotland, on the ground of their lack of philosophy, and pronounces Germany and France to be the only two nations worthy of notice. He passes in review the general state of philosophy and of society in these two nations, declaims upon the French monarchy, the revolution, and the Charter†—and at length arrives at this conclusion; "If all around us is mixed, complex, and mingled, is it possible that philosophy should be exempt from the influence of the general spirit? I ask whether philosophy can avoid being eclectic when all that is around it is so; and whether, consequently, the philosophical reformation which I undertook in 1816, in spite of every obstacle, does not necessarily proceed from the general movement of society throughout Europe, and particularly in France?"‡ There is something in all this that is either above or below our comprehension. We can readily conceive that they who see and feel its force, would find no impediment to glorying in the fancied possession of the culled wisdom of all other sects.

Before dismissing this point, it is right that we should hear Dr. Henry's account of the boastful title of the new school in philosophy. "Its *eclectic* character consists precisely in the pretension of applying its own distinctive principles to the criticism of all other systems, discriminating in each its part of truth and its part of error—and combining the part of truth found in every partial, exclusive, and therefore erroneous system, into a higher, comprehensive system."§ If we rightly apprehend the writer's meaning here, it involves a strange confusion of ideas. Eclecticism, he maintains, is a distinct, scientific theory, possessing its own method and principles, and of course reduced to a system. And yet its method and principles are applied to all existing systems, to gather from them the materials for a higher and comprehensive system, which is to embrace the whole. The test to be applied, implies

\* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 419.

† The following passage, which occurs in this connexion, will give our readers some idea of M. Cousin's method of applying his philosophy to history. "You know that it is not the masses of population which appear upon fields of battle, but the ideas, the causes for which they combat. Thus, at Leipzig and Waterloo, the ideas which encountered each other were those of paternal monarchy and military democracy. Which prevailed, gentlemen? Neither the one, nor the other. Which was the conqueror? Which was the vanquished at Waterloo? Gentlemen, none was vanquished. No! I protest that none was vanquished; the only conquerors were European Civilization, and the Charter." We assure our readers that this is a fair average sample.

‡ Int. to Hist. of Phil., 440.

§ Elem. of Psychology, p. xxx.



the existence of a philosophical creed, and yet this creed is still to be formed from the parts of truth extracted, by the application of itself, to all others! The system of M. Cousin has, in truth, no more claim to the title of Eclectic, than any other that has ever existed. It is quite as Procrustean in its character as others, stretching or lopping off to suit its own dimensions, and differing from them, in this respect, only in its catholic pretensions.

We cannot, for reasons already given, undertake to put our readers in possession of M. Cousin's complete system. But one of its chief peculiarities, in the judgment of Cousin himself, and of his translator, is to be found in the distinction which he draws between the spontaneous and the reflective reason, and this we will endeavour to explain. The fundamental fact of consciousness, according to M. Cousin, is a complex phenomenon, composed of three terms, namely, the me, and the not me, limited, bounded, finite; then the idea of something different from these, of the infinite, of unity, &c.; and again the relation of the me and the not me, that is, of the finite to the infinite, which contains and unfolds it; these are, therefore, the three terms of which the fundamental fact of consciousness is composed. Every man who bends his thoughts inwards, and penetrates only his own consciousness, will find there each of these three elements. If one of these terms is given, the others are given also, nor is it in the power of any man to deny any one of them. Such is now the case, but was it always thus? The distinguishing characteristic of every phenomenon, as now manifested in the consciousness, is the conviction of having tried to deny its truth, and the discovery of an inability to do so. But intelligence could not originally commence with such a denial, seeing that every denial supposes an affirmation of denying. Nor do we commence with reflection, since reflection supposes an operation anterior to itself, and cannot add any terms to those which are given by that operation. Reflection adds itself to that which was, it throws light upon that which is, but it creates nothing. There must have been, therefore, an instinctive development of intelligence, a perception of truth prior to reflection, and independent of the will, a pure affirmation not yet mingled with any negation. This primitive intuition contains all that will, at a later period, be contained in reflection: the me and the not me,\* the infinite and the finite, unity and variety, substance and phenomenon, are contained, though obscurely, in the first flashing forth of spontaneity. This is the spontaneous reason as distinguished from the reflective. The spontaneous reason seizes upon truth at first

\* We quote M. Cousin's description of a man's finding himself. "We do not commence with seeking ourselves, for this would imply that we already know that we exist; but, on a certain day, at a certain hour, at a certain moment,—a moment, solemn in existence!—without having sought ourselves, we find ourselves:—thought, in its instinctive development, discloses to us that we are; we affirm our existence with profound assurance,—with an assurance unmingled with any negation whatever."—*Int. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 164.

sight; comprehends and receives it, without asking why it does so. It is independent of the will, and therefore impersonal. It does not belong to us: though in us, it is not of us, it is not ours. It is absolute, and gives pure truth, and in all men the same truth. But in the reflective reason, our own voluntary activity is concerned, and here is found the source of difference and error.\*

Such is, substantially, M. Cousin's account of the distinction between the spontaneous and the reflective reason. He claims it as a discovery of his own, which he lighted upon "in the recesses of consciousness, and at a depth to which Kant did not penetrate." Kant paused at the apparent relativeness and subjectivity of the laws of thought, but by diving deeper M. Cousin "detected and unfolded the fact, instantaneous but real, of the spontaneous perception of truth—a perception which, not reflecting itself immediately, passes without notice in the interior consciousness, but is the actual basis of that which, at a subsequent period, in a logical form, and in the hands of reflection, becomes a necessary conception."

We can now show the reader the ground which M. Cousin's philosophy affords him for a belief in the objective existence of the world, and God. The system of Kant led to scepticism, inasmuch as it taught that all the laws of thought are altogether subjective, and the evil consequence was remedied only by assigning an illogical office to the practical reason. But M. Cousin has gained the same end, and saved his logic. "All subjectivity expires in the spontaneity of perception. Reason, it is true, becomes subjective by its relation to the free and voluntary me, the seat and type of all subjectivity; but in itself it is impersonal; it belongs to no one individual rather than another, within the compass of humanity; it belongs not even to humanity itself." Reason, therefore, being impersonal, it follows that it is absolute, and that the truths it gives are absolute truths. Here is the only resting-place given us for our belief in the objective existence of the finite or the infinite—the spontaneity, hence the impersonality, and hence the absolute character of reason. He who does not "possess the strength to penetrate deeply into the recesses of his own mind, to pierce through reflection (we know not with what instrument), in order to arrive at the basis of all reflection," or who, when he has arrived at this deep place, is not fortunate enough to find there "a pure affirmation, not yet mingled with any negation, and containing in it all that has subsequently been given by reflection," has no proper evidence for the spontaneity of reason upon which this solution of the problem of the objective rests. It is to this pure affirmation, sometimes represented as "so pure that it escapes notice," so bright

\* The preceding account of the two-fold development of reason is drawn chiefly from the sixth Lecture of the Introduction to the History of Philosophy: it is, perhaps, a work of supererogation to say that it is given in the author's own phraseology, though abridged, since we are sure our readers will acquit us of the ability to construct it ourselves.

that we cannot see it, that the appeal is made in proof of what is styled the spontaneous reason. We must, therefore, find this "pure affirmation" in our consciousness, or must admit, in deference to M. Cousin's logic, that it exists there, though so brightly that we cannot see it, before we can believe in any objective existence. That is, unless we have strength enough to make the discovery in the recesses of our own minds, a task to which M. Cousin acknowledges that but few men are equal, we must admit that there exists in our consciousness something of which we are nevertheless not conscious, in order to be satisfied of the objective existence of either the world or God; and we regard this as so uncertain a path for arriving at certainty, that we believe few, on this side of the Atlantic, will trust their feet in it:

Whom shall we find  
Sufficient? Who shall tempt with wandering feet  
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way?

There are some other results of the non-subjectivity of the spontaneous reason which are more startling. It is the pure affirmation, the spontaneous perception of the reason, which gives us the finite and the infinite. Whence comes this reason which enlightens us, but does not belong to us? "This principle," M. Cousin says, "is God, the first and last principle of all things." Human reason therefore "becomes divine in its own eyes." "Reason is literally a revelation, a necessary and universal revelation which is wanting to no man, and which enlightens every man on his coming into the world. Reason is the necessary mediator between God and man, the Logos of Pythagoras and Plato, the Word made flesh, which serves as the interpreter of God and the teacher of man, divine and human at the same time." There is no hesitation on the part of M. Cousin in drawing from this the conclusion that "humanity is inspired,—the divine breath which is in it always and everywhere reveals to it all truths under one form or another according to the place and the time." "Every man thinks, every man therefore thinks God, if we may so express it." "Everywhere present, he (God) returns as it were to himself in the consciousness of man, of which he indirectly constitutes the mechanism and phenomenal triplicity by the reflection of his own nature and of the substantial triplicity of which he is the absolute identity."\* In human reason there are found three ideas, a triplicity in unity; the infinite, the finite, and the relation which subsists between them;—the passage from these ideas to God, says M. Cousin, is not difficult, "for these ideas are God himself." We earnestly call attention to this as one of the most hideous heads of the pantheistical hydra. The dogmatic theologians of this sect have put it in the place of the incarnation, and the poets of "Young

\* *Elem. of Psychol.*, p. 400. See Marheineke *Dogm.*, §§ 229, ff. Bretschneider, *ubi supr.*, p. 49.



Germany" are teaching the intoxicated youth to regard themselves as sublime realizations of the divine reason. So Schefer, in his passionate verses, designates man as *the Son of God*, as *godlike*, nay, as the *God-man*; and in a phrenzy of self-apotheosis proceeds to call the human head the *city of the gods*!

But to resume our thread: as in human consciousness there are found only two ideas and their connexion, forming three elements, so in nature, two corresponding laws, and their connexion, govern the material universe. We find in the world the same triplicity in unity as in ourselves. "The world accordingly is of the same stuff with ourselves, and nature is the sister of man." And here we find in God, man, and the world, the triplicity in unity again, which figures so largely in the Eclectic philosophy. The unity of the three is not obscurely taught in the following passage. "The interior movement of the energies of the world, in the necessary progress of their development from degree to degree, from kingdom to kingdom, produces that wondrous being whose fundamental attribute is consciousness, and in this consciousness we have met with precisely the same elements which, subject to different conditions, we had already found to exist in nature:—the same elements which we had recognised in God himself."\* M. Cousin has not permitted the shadow of a doubt to rest upon the pantheistical tendency of his philosophy. "God," he tells us, "is at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance and always cause, being substance only in so far as he is cause, and cause only in so far as he is substance, that is to say, being absolute cause, one and many, eternity and time, space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and totality, principle, end and centre, at the summit of being and at its lowest degree, infinite and finite together, triple in a word, that is to say, at the same time with God, nature, and humanity. In fact, if God be not everything, he is nothing; if he be absolutely indivisible in himself, he is inaccessible; and consequently he is incomprehensible, and his incomprehensibility is for us the same as his destruction."† M. Cousin has attempted to forestall the charge of pantheism, by pronouncing it the bugbear of feeble imaginations. This is a very common, and not a very creditable artifice. But we trust that there is, in our country at least, enough of this feebleness of imagination to be affrighted by the bugbear, and to shrink back with horror from such a philosophical aliment as is offered by an infidel philosophy; and the more so when we see in every new arrival of European journals, that there is scarcely a doctrine of orthodox Christianity on which these harpies have not descended, claiming it as their own, and so defiling it by impious misuse as to give us poison under the shape of food.

No sincere and earnest inquirer after truth, humble and reverent in his self-distrust as he must needs be, can fail to take offence at

\* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 158.

† Elem. of Psychol., p. 399.

the bold and confident tone in which M. Cousin settles all questions; and especially will the pious mind recoil from his unhallowed intrusions upon the nature and essence of the Deity. He professes indeed to believe and teach the existence of God. He professes, too, sad omen at the outset, thoroughly to comprehend his nature and essence. He does not pretend to deny, he pleads guilty to, the accusation of seeking "to penetrate into the depths of the Divine Essence, which common opinion declares to be incomprehensible."\* "So little is God incomprehensible, that his *nature* is constituted by ideas—by *those* ideas whose nature it is to be intelligible." "The measure of the comprehensibility of God is the measure of human faith." They who falter and draw back from this rushing in of fools where angels dare not tread, are reproached with "pusillanimous mysticism." He admits that God "is incomprehensible as a formula, and in the schools," but we should consider that "mysticism is the necessary form of all religion"—"the symbolical and mystical form is inherent in religion"—and "to speak plainly, the religious form and the philosophical form are different from each other." Though religion, therefore, must of necessity present truths under a mysterious and incomprehensible form, it is the right of philosophy to penetrate this form, and disengage the ideas; it is its duty "to comprehend nothing, and to admit nothing but in so far as it is true in itself, and in the form of ideas." God exists only so far as we comprehend him. His nature is constituted by ideas, and those ideas are wholly within the stretch and compass of our reason. "I will speak," says our author, "plainly and unequivocally upon this point. Mystery is a word which belongs not to the vocabulary of philosophy, but to that of religion."†

\* *Introd. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 132.

† *Introd. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 134. There is an admirable contrast between the pert self-sufficiency of M. Cousin, and the humble truth-loving spirit of the illustrious Descartes, who is honoured and lauded as the author of the Psychological Method, and the founder of the Ideal School of Philosophy. Cousin calls himself one of the sons of Descartes. Degenerate son of a noble sire! Compare the modest caution of the one with the all-embracing arrogance of the other. "Quod ut satis tuto et sine errandi periculo aggrediamur, cā nobis cautelā est utendum, ut semper quam maxime recordemur, et Deum auctorem rerum esse infinitum, et nos omnino finitos. Ita si forte nobis Deus de se ipso, vel aliis aliunde revelet, quod naturales ingenii nostri vires excedat, qualia jam sunt mysteria Incarnationis et Trinitatis, non recusabimus illa credere, quamvis non clare intelligamus; nec ullo modo mirabimur multa esse, tum in immensa ejus natura, tum etiam in rebus ab eo creatis, quae captum nostrum excedant."—*Princ. Phil.*, § xxv.

Another truly great man, of the same age, in urging the use of reason in theology, addresses to those who employ this noble talent in all other matters, but hide it under a bushel when they come to the study of God and of his word, the expostulation, "Cave, cave, ne quondam a te rigide satis rationes exigantur tam male collocati tui talenti." But he immediately adds, "Scio quam maxime, nec opus est ut monear, plurima esse, quae Deus in verbo suo nobis revelavit, captum nostrum infinites superantia, qualia sunt momentosissima fidei capita de S. S. Trinitate, de eterna generatione filii, de ejus incarnatione, de resurrectione mortuorum,—haec sane credidi, credo, et per gratiam Dei semper credam, quia ea revelare mihi dignatus est."—*Joh. Bernouilli, Opera*, vol. i., p. 196.

We could quote much to the same effect from Leibnitz, to whom M. Cousin does

With this for his point of departure, it is not surprising that M. Cousin should be led to reject entirely the God of the scriptures, and substitute in his stead a shadowy abstraction. In place of the mysterious and incomprehensible Jehovah, whose infinite perfections will be the study and delight of an eternity, we have a God whose nature and essence we can now, while seeing through a glass darkly, thoroughly comprehend, and to whom faith is not permitted to attribute anything of excellence or glory beyond what the human intellect can clearly discern. In place of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God to whom his people, in all ages, have fled for refuge, crying, *do Thou deliver me and save me*, we are presented with a vague personification of abstract principles, with a God who is described as the reason; thought, with its fundamental momenta; space, time, and number; the substance of the *me*, or the free personality, and of the fatal *not me* or nature; who returns to himself in the consciousness of man; of whose divine essence all the momenta pass into the world, and return into the consciousness of man; who is everything, and it might, with equal significancy, be added, nothing.

With this notion of God no one will contradict the position frequently assumed by M. Cousin, that Atheism is impossible. Who can deny the existence of reason, of thought, of the world? And if he cannot deny these, he cannot deny God, for these are God. It is substantially upon this ground that M. Cousin rests the impossibility of Atheism. "Every man believes in his own existence, every man, therefore, believes in the existence of the world, and God. Every man thinks; every man, therefore, thinks God. Every human proposition contains God; every man who speaks, speaks of God, and every word is an act of faith and a hymn. Every assertion, even though negative, is a judgment which contains the idea of being, and consequently, God in his fullness."\* To the same effect we are told "that all thought implies a spontaneous faith in God, and natural Atheism has no existence." Every man who believes that he exists, believes all that is necessary. "If he believes this, I am satisfied; for if he believes that he exists, he then believes that his thought,—that he believes his existence—is worthy of faith; he, therefore, places his faith in the principle of his thought;—now, there is God."† Even the sceptic who doubts everything, is not to be brought as an objection to this doctrine. For does he deny that he denies? Does he doubt that he doubts? If he only affirms that he doubts, in that affirmation there is included faith in himself and in God. Behold, then, all men converted into believers—respect humanity, for all its members acknowledge the same God;—impute Atheism to no man, for every

homage "as the greatest authority among modern philosophers." These were men who were seeking, with passionate earnestness, after truth: they were not founding new schools in philosophy. They were men of large powers and large attainments, and could afford to confess ignorance, where it is folly to be wise.

\* Elem. of Psych., pp. 401, 402.

† Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 174.



man speaks, and each word is an act of faith in God; every man believes in his own consciousness, and it is in human consciousness that God returns to himself; "human consciousness is like the divine essence which it manifests." Such is the practical conclusion of this philosophy. And we admit its justness; it is logically connected with the premises. With the notion of God given us by M. Cousin, Atheism is indeed impossible. And so it is impossible under any scheme of idolatry which assumes an object in the existence of which all men must of necessity believe, as its God. The African, having established that his *fetish* is God, will have no difficulty in proving that all men, or as many at least as believe in the evidence of their senses, believe in God. Atheism is a term that bears relation to the true God revealed in the Bible, to the God that is found under the "venerable form of religion," and the philosophy that approaches this form to disengage the idea of God, and change it to a new one, though it comes with many expressions of "profound respect and veneration," and with all the deferential and smirking politeness of a French *petit maître*, is essentially atheistic in its character, and as such should be held in equal abhorrence with the open and frontless denial of God. M. Cousin, to do him justice, never fails in polite respect towards religion; he even refers, with evident approbation, to the pious politeness "of the octogenary author of the *Système du Monde* (an Atheist), who bowed and uncovered his head, whenever God was named." But when a man robs us of our God, it is but little matter whether he does it with an open and rude violence, or with a smooth and complaisant legerdemain.

The idea of creation is of necessity modified by the idea of God. What is it to create? After stating and repudiating the "vulgar definition, which is, to make something out of nothing," M. Cousin proceeds to seek the true conception of this act among the facts of consciousness. "To create," he says, "is a thing which it is not difficult to conceive, for it is a thing which we do at every moment; in fact we create whenever we perform a free action. Here is the type of a creation. The divine creation is the same in its nature. God, if he is a cause, can create; and if he is an absolute cause, he cannot but create; and in creating the universe he does not draw it forth from nothingness, but from himself. God, therefore, creates; he creates by virtue of his creative power; he draws forth the world, not from nothingness, which is not, but from him who is absolute existence. An absolute creative force, which cannot but pass into act, being eminently his characteristic, it follows, not that creation is possible, but that it is necessary: it follows that God is creating without cessation and infinitely, and that creation is inexhaustible, and sustains itself constantly."\* M. Cousin, on one occasion, intimates that he knows "he is speaking in 1828, and not in 1850," and we presume a de-

\* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., pp. 136—142.

cent regard for the prejudices of the age in which his lot is cast, prevented him from stating an immediate inference from the principles here laid down. If it be the most eminent characteristic of God that he is an absolute creative force that cannot but pass into act, we are driven to believe in the eternal creation of the world, or rather in the eternal co-existence and oneness of God, and the universe. The possibility of a creation, in the strict and proper sense of the term, is denied by M. Cousin at the outset. He says that "Leucippus, Epicurus, Bayle, and Spinoza, and indeed all others whose powers of thought are somewhat exercised, demonstrate, that out of nothing, nothing can be drawn forth; that out of nothing, nothing can come forth; whence it follows that creation is impossible. Yet by pursuing a different route our investigations arrive at this very different result, viz., that creation is, I do not say, possible, but necessary." And what is this different route which conducts from the same premises to so opposite a conclusion? It is, as we have seen, by changing the meaning of the word. It is by narrowing the term to signify only what we every moment do, what every cause, now in action, does. By confounding creation with causation, and defining God to be a creative force that could not but pass into act, either Leucippus or Spinoza might have proved as clearly as M. Cousin has done, that creation, so far from being impossible, is both possible and necessary. That they did not arrive at this "different result," should be imputed perhaps rather to their candour, than to their want of penetration.

If the maxim "*nihil posse creari de nihilo*" be received as universally true, and applied in limitation of the divine power, as well as human, creation is of course impossible. Creation is the making of something out of nothing, and if this cannot be done there can be no creation. We find matter now in existence. Unless it had existed eternally, there was a time when it did not exist. It must then have been formed either of something already existing, which, by hypothesis, is not matter, that is, of spirit, or it must have been formed of nothing. But matter cannot be a modified form of spiritual existence, and according to M. Cousin, it cannot be drawn forth from nothing. The only legitimate conclusion to which we can arrive from these premises is, that matter does not now exist, or that it has had an independent existence from eternity, or that it is an emanation from the Deity. The latter opinion seems to be the one held by M. Cousin. The material universe, he teaches us, was not formed out of nothing;—"God drew it forth from himself; therefore, he creates with all the characteristics which we have recognised in him, and which pass necessarily into his creation."\* We find, too, the following passage in his preface to the second edition of the *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Dr. Henry, and appended to the *Elements of Psychology*. "God exists for us only in the relation of cause; without this,

\* *Introd.*, p. 142.

reason would not refer to him either humanity or the world. He is absolute substance only inasmuch as he is absolute cause; and his essence consists precisely in his creative power.”\* M. Cousin’s theory of Cosmogony is now quite plain. The essence of God is his creative power. He is an absolute force, subjected to a necessity of acting, and of developing in its effects those characteristics and those alone which are found in itself. God is made the mere living force, the *vis viva*, of the universe, and all things are but the radiations and effluxes of this primary and interior energy. This is the theory taught, if we may credit the Hermetic Fragments, by the ancient Egyptians, and which is at this day held both by the Brahmins and Buddhists of the East. Among all the ancients, unless the Tuscans be an exception, the creation of something out of nothing was held to be a palpable absurdity. It was a common article in all the different creeds of Grecian and Roman philosophy, that “*gigni de nihilo nil, in nihilum nil posse reverti.*” This led to two different theories of the origin of the visible universe, either of them exclusive of a creation properly so called. The one, that of most of the Greek schools, which taught the eternity, and independent existence of matter; the other, that of the oriental systems, which represented the universe as an emanation from within the Deity. Thus in the Yajur Veid, as translated by Du Perron, it is said: “The whole universe is the Creator, proceeds from the Creator, exists in him, and returns to him. The ignorant assert that the universe, in the beginning, did not exist in its author, and that it was created out of nothing. Oh, ye whose hearts are pure, how could something be made out of nothing? This first Being alone, and without likeness, was the *all* in the beginning: he could multiply himself under different forms; he created fire from his essence, which is light,” &c. This doctrine was early carried into Greece, and adopted by many of their philosophers. It is found in the Orphic remains, especially in the poem *de Mundo*, as quoted by Aristotle and Proclus, in Aeschylus, and in most of the Greek poets. It seems to have special affinities for poetry. In modern times it has made its reappearance in the polished periods of Pope’s Essay on Man, and it runs through the wild and impious imaginations of Shelley.† Under the poetic dress this system is more tolerable, because we can ordinarily make such deductions for poetic imagery as will bring it within the compass of truth. But when in the grave language of didactic philosophy we are told that the very essence of God is his creative power; that he is a force that was compelled to act and to pass with all his characteristics into the visible world; and that nothing now exists which has not from eternity existed in God; we are con-

\* Elem. of Psych., p. 408.

† Wordsworth occasionally borders on the very extreme of poetic license upon this subject. The philosophical principles of the Essay on Man were dictated by Bolingbroke, and it is supposed that Pope was not himself sufficiently aware of their tendency.



cerned, we are alarmed. This necessary transfusion of God into the universe destroys our very idea of God.\* He is made the substratum, the substance of all existence; and we are only bubbles thrown up upon the bosom of the mighty ALL, to reflect the rainbow colours, in our brief phenomenal existence, and then be absorbed again into the ocean from which we came.†

It will have been already anticipated from the exposition we have given, that M. Cousin's philosophy makes sad havoc with Christianity. He is indeed studiously polite to Christianity as well as to natural religion. "He knows that he is speaking in 1828, and not in 1850." This knowledge it is, doubtless, that draws forth his kind and forbearing indulgence towards Christianity,—his patience, with its slowness of movement,—nay, his condescending patronage. "Christianity is the philosophy of the people. He who now addresses you sprang from the people, and from Christianity; and I trust you will always recognise this, in my profound and tender respect for all that is of the people and of Christianity. Philosophy is patient; she knows what was the course of events in former generations, and she is full of confidence in the future; happy in seeing the great bulk of mankind in the arms of Christianity, she offers, with modest kindness, to assist her in ascending to a yet loftier elevation."‡ And again, he says, "I believe that in Christianity all truths are contained; but these eternal truths may and ought to be approached, disengaged, and illustrated by philosophy. Truth has but one foundation; but truth assumes two forms, mystery and scientific exposition; I revere the one, I am the organ and interpreter of the other."§ Infidelity has, in most cases, assumed this guise of philosophical explanation of the truths of Christianity. Hume proposed only to place faith upon its proper foundation; and even Voltaire and the French Encyclopedists professed to be rendering true service to Christianity, while they were seeking to sap its foundations and overwhelm it with utter ruin. But unless it be to blind the eyes, and evade the arm of the ecclesiastical power, which in Catholic countries holds watch over the press, we see not what good purpose can be effected by so thin a disguise as that assumed by M. Cousin.|| He surely cannot ima-

\* If La Place had only personified under the name of God, the forces with which the attenuated matter of his *nebular* hypothesis was supposed to be endowed, he might, with as much justice as M. Cousin, have escaped the imputation of atheism.

† The fittest symbolical form that has ever been given to this creed is that of an oriental sect, who represent the Deity as an immense spider seated at the centre of the universe, and spinning forth all things from his own body.

‡ Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 57.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

|| Among those whom we look to as readers of such articles as this there are some who are turning their steps to the enchanted ground of German literature, either in its primitive or its secondary and Gallicized division. Let us, with all the earnestness of disinterested dread, caution the young American. Under the disguises of romance and poesy, he will learn to tolerate the hell-born dogmas of the *young Germany*; the mingled lust and blasphemy of Heine, Pückler Muskau, and Schefer; or, if he wander in these domains as a theologian, the Iscariot Christianity of the disciples of Schelling, Hegel, and Daub.

gine that the most ordinary intelligence could fail to penetrate the flimsy hypocrisy. He comes down from the heights of philosophy, to meet Christianity in her helplessness and aid her in ascending to a loftier elevation! Though tolerant of her past slowness, yet knowing that she must move more rapidly to meet the wants of the future, he comes, with modest kindness, to disburden her of her mysteries, and quicken her steps! He presents himself as an interpreter, in scientific exposition, of a revelation from God, and the canon which he brings in his hand and openly exposes, is to admit nothing which this revelation contains as truth, unless by falling back upon our own pure reason we find it to be true in itself and in the form of ideas! In his solution of the mystery of the Incarnation, in which Reason is declared to be the Word made flesh, we have both proof and warning of the kind of assistance which Christianity may expect at his hands. All the sacred mysteries of revelation dwindle, in like manner, under his profane touch, into the stale truths of our own consciousness. Locke encounters the sneers of M. Cousin because he had not discovered this mode of making Christianity easy. Speaking of the appeals made by Locke to Christianity, to revelation, and to faith, he says, "By faith, however, and by revelation, he does not understand a philosophical faith and revelation. This interpretation did not exist in the age of Locke. He understands faith and revelation, in the proper orthodox, theological sense."\* If we have a just idea of the temper of Locke, he would have scorned to avail himself of this slippery and deceptive interpretation. It is an ungracious task to be alarmists, and we should shun the office if only some specialties of this or that sect were at stake, and not, as we believe, the very basis of all religion and morals. Socinianism is evangelical when compared with the newest theology of Germany.

M. Cousin's patronage of Christianity becomes sometimes ludicrous. He declares, with gravity, that "it is the best of all religions, and it is the most accomplished of all." He assigns a reason for its accomplishments. It is this, "that the Christian religion is that which of all other religions came last; and it is unreasonable to suppose that the religion which came last should not be better than all others, should not embrace and resume them all."† The perfectibility of the human species is a cardinal doctrine with M. Cousin. Humanity is ever in the right; and its progress is steadily onward and upward. Each age is an improvement on its predecessor, and every new system is superior to all that have gone before it. The inferiority of Christianity will therefore be demonstrated, should the general apostasy, which some predict, take place after its universal prevalence.

We need not seek in the remote deductions and results of M. Cousin's philosophy for evidence of its irreconcilable hostility to Christianity. In its first principles it overthrows the foundation of divine revelation. The spontaneous reason, we are told by M.

\* *Elem. of Psych.*, p. 213.

† *Introd. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 339.

Cousin, is God, and the truths given by it are "literally a revelation from God." And since this reason is found in all men, "humanity is inspired." The original fact of affirmation, which is found by M. Cousin in human consciousness, beneath reflection, and anterior to all negation, and upon which he relies for proof of the existence of the spontaneous reason, "this fact it is, which the human race have agreed to call inspiration." This inspiration is attended always by enthusiasm. "It is the spirit of God with us: it is immediate intuition as opposed to induction and demonstration: it is the primitive spontaneity opposed to the ulterior development of reflection."\* As neither the senses nor the will are concerned in this primitive act of pure apperception, we cannot refer it to ourselves. Therefore, "when man is conscious of the wondrous fact of inspiration and enthusiasm, feeling himself unable to refer it to himself, he refers it to God; and gives to this original and pure affirmation the name of revelation. Is the human race wrong?† When man, conscious of his feeble intervention of the fact of inspiration, refers to God the truths which he has not made, and which rule over him, does he deceive himself? No, certainly not; for what is God? I have told you; he is thought in itself, with its fundamental momenta; he is eternal reason, the substance and the cause of the truths which man perceives. When man, therefore, refers to God that truth which he cannot refer either to this world, or to his own personality, he refers it to him to whom he ought to refer it; and this absolute affirmation of truth, without reflection,—this inspiration,—enthusiasm,—is veritable revelation."‡ All men are inspired, and all are inspired in an equal degree. This spontaneity of reason, which is to all men a veritable revelation from God, "does not admit of essential differences." It gives pure truth, and in all men the same truth. "Everywhere, in its instinctive and spontaneous form, reason is equal to itself, in all the generations of humanity, and in all the individuals of which these different generations are composed."§ It is too plain for argument, that these principles destroy all that is peculiar and valuable in the sacred scriptures. The distinctive claim which they put forth, of containing a revelation from God, is set aside by a similar claim on behalf of every man. Humanity is inspired in all its members, and revelations of truth are made to all men in nearly equal degree. When holy men of God spake of old, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, they were but giving utterance to the visions of the spontaneous reason, and the truths declared by Christ and his apostles were from God only in the same sense in which all our

\* *Elem. of Psych.*, p. 301.

† The deification of collective humanity is regarded by many in Germany as the regenerative principle of our age. The fashionable pantheism of Berlin teaches that 'whatever is (in politics) is right; a blessed creed for the courtiers of an absolute monarch; and which, when applied to morals, forbids us, as does a living poet, to dim our mind's eye with any tears of penitence; for all hatred is only love seen on the wrong side!'

‡ *Introd. to Hist. of Phil.*, pp. 165, 166

§ *Introd.*, p. 174.



own intuitions of truth are from God. The Koran is of equal authority with the Bible ; all pretended revelations have one and the same authority, that is, the self-evidence of the truths which they contain. The Gospel of Christ is thus stripped of its high prerogative as a special message from God ; and holy prophets and apostles, nay, our Saviour too, were deceived in supposing that they had any other kind of communication with God than that which every man enjoys. No special revelation could, according to this philosophy, be accredited to the world. No messenger or interpreter could be furnished for a divine mission among men. The truths revealed to any man through the operations of his instinctive reason, and by him proclaimed to others, cannot be received except by such as find the same truths in their own spontaneity of reason. And the only way, therefore, by which God could make known his will, and give it authority among men, would be by enlarging the spontaneous reason of every man. At precisely this point the extremes of flat Rationalism and the philosophy of the Absolute come together. Their osculation is seen in Strauss's "Life of Jesus," which has almost convulsed the religious world in Germany. Marheineke and Röhr, like Herod and Pilate, agree only when the Son of God is to be crucified. Would to God that our fellow Christians in America, before abandoning as shallow the philosophy of the great English fathers, would take the trouble to examine the issues of the paths on which they are entering ! Let us have any philosophy, however shallow, that leaves us in quiet possession of the Gospel, rather than the dark and hopeless bewilderment into which we are thrown by the deep metaphysics of M. Cousin. We say to him and to Dr. Henry, in the language of Edmund Burke, "If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on infidelity to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire. It will be illuminated with other lights. It will be perfumed with other incense, than the infectious stuff which is imported by the smugglers of adulterated metaphysics."

They who are accustomed to look to the sanctions of religion for the chief support of morality, will naturally surmise that M. Cousin is not unduly strict in his ethical code. When God is made to be thought, reason, space, time, and number, there is not much room left for the commission of any serious offences against him. If humanity is inspired, there is no reason to doubt that humanity will always be in the right. We accordingly find, that under the cheerful philosophy of M. Cousin, it is a crime to "blaspheme humanity." Forms of government or of religion, which have extensively prevailed, could not have subsisted without the consent of humanity, and though it is our privilege to criticise, we are taught that it would be wrong to condemn them. The spirit of each particular age, the temper of each system of philosophy, in short, everything which has existed through the occurrence of humanity, is right ; "it has its apology in its existence." We are

warned not to "accuse humanity," by condemning religious or political laws which have had the confidence and sympathy of the masses of mankind. "To imprecate power (long and lasting power), we are told, is to blaspheme humanity; to bring accusations against glory, is nothing less than to bring accusations against humanity, by which it is decreed. What is glory, gentlemen? It is the judgment of humanity upon its members; and humanity is always in the right."\* No appeal can be taken from the judgment of humanity, for "its judgment is infallible."†

We are led to a conclusion which M. Cousin does not scruple to avow and apply, that success is the criterion of moral excellence. He sets it down as "the peculiar characteristic of a great man, that he succeeds." He proves that in every battle which has ever taken place, "the vanquished party deserved to be vanquished—that the victorious party was the better, the more moral party; and that, therefore, it was victorious."‡ This singular demonstration may be summed up in a single sentence, which we extract:—"Courage is a virtue which has a right to the recompense of victory,—weakness is a vice, and, inasmuch as it is so, it is always punished and beaten."§ Examination and reflection, we are told, will convince us, in every case, that "the vanquished ought to have been vanquished," and that our sympathy and applause should be "on the side of the victor, for his is the better cause."

We have never seen the odious maxim, Whatever is, is right, pressed to a more insane extent, than is given to it in M. Cousin's philosophy. It is this abominable principle which breathes into his system the cheerful inspiration upon which he so much loves to dwell. We may, indeed, thus learn to be cheerful under any aspect of affairs, we may bow the knee to any religion, we may cordially embrace any form of government, we may shout in the procession of any conqueror, we may rejoice with the successful oppressor, and insult the oppressed with the truth that he deserves to suffer,—but at what expense do we purchase this easy and cheerful temper! What a sacrifice of the tender charities of our nature, what a dreadful perversion of truth and conscience does it involve! We must first learn to believe what M. Cousin indeed distinctly teaches, that prudence, courage and strength, though united with ambition, revenge, cruelty and rapacity, constitute a moral excellence that deserves to triumph over imprudence and weakness, though associated with the greatest mildness, forbearance, and benevolence. We would rather weep sometimes with those that weep, than have our tears thus stayed.

There is to us a dark and dreary fatalism pervading M. Cousin's system, of which symptoms have already appeared in the extracts we have given. He does not indeed teach what is commonly meant by fatalism. He is a strenuous advocate for the freedom of the will, and talks much of our free personality. But then this

\* *Introd.*, p. 309.† *Ibid.*, p. 310.‡ *Ibid.*, p. 282.§ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

freedom itself is but one of the products of a deeper fatalism which pervades the universe, and works out its results in all things. The mechanical theory of the French atheists, which was the product of the philosophy of sensation, and the ideal theory of the Transcendentalists, arrive, in this respect, though by different routes, at much the same conclusion. And though each brings with it somewhat of the dust of the road by which it has come, there is not much to choose between them. The one is indeed more refined and spiritual than the other. We hear less of the working and grinding of the machinery. It is an abstract and ideal mechanism to which it subjects us, but still a mechanism. All things are moved on by a resistless destiny. Even God is represented as a creative force, which could not but pass into act. And again, we are told, "God could not remain in a state of absolute unity; that absolute unity, that eternal substance, being a creative force, could not but create.\*" Cousin teaches us that every man who exists is but the exponent of some pre-existing necessity; that every book that is written is but the realization of an idea that must needs take this form, and that everything which occurs represents an idea which could not but be represented at that precise time, and in that very manner. After a full exposition of the *a priori* demand for Universal History, he concludes, "hence the necessity of Bossuet." The idea had been ripening for some time, and at length there was an imperative necessity for it to put on a concrete form, and it immediately assumed it in the person of the Bishop of Meaux. Nor is this all. It was not only necessary that Bossuet should come into existence at this precise moment, and that he should write a Universal History, but his plan also was subject to necessity. After a full account of the *a priori* urgency of an idea upon this subject, we are told, "hence, gentlemen, the necessity of Bossuet's plan." We have then an account of the necessity which called into being and set at work, in their respective functions, Vico, Herder, Tenneman, and others. It would seem as if there had been some difficulty in finding concrete habitation for the abstract necessities of the Cartesian philosophy. Descartes himself was the product of a necessity which grew out of the dependence and subjection of the scholastic systems. It was necessary that there should be a revolution, in which reason might shake off the shackles of authority and enter upon the true method of philosophizing. And Descartes came to represent this idea. But then Descartes was a gentleman and a soldier; Malebranche was a monk, Berkeley an eminent bishop, Spinoza a recluse and Leibnitz a statesman. There was, therefore, a necessity, in the Cartesian philosophy, for a great professor: "this was the place and destiny of Wolf."†

\* Introd. to Hist. of Phil., p. 303.

† Introd., p. 240. The inference is obvious: there still remained a necessity in the philosophy of the age for a "peer of France." Quere: Does the same principle of necessary emanation from the age and circumstances hold in the case of translations? Or could M. Cousin, by an inverse method, declare the horoscope of his admirers?



There is a wider domain and a stricter rule given by M. Cousin, to this destiny, than is conceded by most even of fatalists. Not only do all men, and especially great men, represent ideas which it was necessary should find their representation in them, but "every place represents an idea." There is nothing in the world which has not its necessity for existing, and which does not, therefore, represent an idea. "Yes! gentlemen," says our author, "give me the map of any country, its configuration, its climate, its waters, its winds, and the whole of its physical geography; give me its natural productions, its flora, its zoology, &c., and I pledge myself to tell you, *a priori*, what will be the quality of man in that country, and what part its inhabitants will act in history—not accidentally, but necessarily, not at any particular epoch, but in all:—in short—what idea he is called to represent." The philosophy which denies that "all things hold and bind each other together," which emancipates man in any degree from the laws of brass and iron, which works so effectually upon him even through nature, that "the existence of a particular country determines the existence of a particular people," is branded as a "sentimental and pusillanimous spiritualism, which, though well enough adapted to the minds of children and women, would not be less fatal to science than materialism itself."\*

M. Cousin has a reason, aside from the principles of his philosophy, for being a fatalist. "All great men," he says, "have been fatalists." And as he has provided the way, in all other respects, for his being a great man, it would hardly answer for him to fail here. "A great man," he informs us, "is a general idea, concentrated in a strong individuality, so that its generality may appear without suppressing his individuality." From this definition of a great man he infers that no priest, prophet, or pontiff, can be great, since their existence consists in their relation to the God whom they announce: with them "God is everything, and man is nothing;" "sacerdotal castes destroy individuality, for in them nothing appears but the name of the caste, and the name of the caste is the name of its God." Therefore, it appears that no priest, and by parity of reason, no religious man, in whom the idea of the infinite prevails over the finite, and to whom "God is everything, and man nothing," can be a great man. War and philosophy are the only two lines of life which are favourable to the development of great men. "Who are they," he asks, "who have left the greatest names among men? They are those who have done their countrymen the greatest good, who have served them most effectually; that is, who have made the greatest conquests, for the ideas which in their century were called to dominion, and which then represented the destinies of civilisation; that is, who have gained the most battles."† But M. Cousin is not a warrior, except in the bloodless conflict of ideas, and it would not do to limit greatness to war. We have, in

\* Introd., p. 242.

† Ib., p. 321.

consequence, another demonstration, concluding, "Therefore, the great philosopher is, in his time and country, the ultimate perfection of all other great men, and, together with the great captain, he is the most complete representation of the people to whom he belongs."\* The way is therefore open to M. Cousin. But it is "the peculiar mark of a great man that he succeeds." And M. Cousin has succeeded: for the "name of eclecticism, whether chosen well or ill, begins for some time since to be somewhat spread abroad, and to resound in France and elsewhere."† Does not all the world, too, know that M. Cousin has been made a peer of France? Without doubt he has succeeded. What is further necessary? Why, "all great men have in a greater or less degree been fatalists."‡ And he has given sufficient proof that he labours under no lack of this qualification.

Let us again pause for a little season, and, looking back upon our dreary way, take in at one retrospective survey so much of the field as may include the German, the French, and the mongrel philosophies. They are districts of the same kingdom, alike in arrogance, in nonsense, and in impiety.

Campbell has a chapter in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, intended to point out the cause of the fact that nonsense so often escapes being detected, both by the writer and by the reader; but he did not live to see what we have seen. Grosser absurdities than those which may be selected from the German and the mock-German metaphysics, we believe the world never beheld; and these not in scattered places, but for page after page, and chapter after chapter. The Germans of the transcendental school complain that we of the Anglo-Saxon race are dull, terrestrial, and shallow; their defect is equally unfortunate, for no one of them has the faculty for descrying an absurdity, as such. The grossest and most drivelling nonsense, which could be expressed in a jargon of words, would probably to a transcendentalist exhibit nothing ridiculous, and perhaps something august. Except the *Philosophy of the Absolute*, few things can be imagined more ludicrously and disgustingly absurd, than the revelations of Böhme, or Jacob Behmen, as we more familiarly call him. Yet, these ravings of the inspired shoemaker are regarded with "affectionate reverence,"§ not only by Schelling, but by Coleridge; and, more amazing still, have conduced in no small degree to the introduction of the modern philosophy, as has been proved and acknowledged.||

In the land of their prevalence these systems have been frequently compared to the dreams of the early Gnostics, and the resemblance is too striking to escape any one versed in church history;

\* *Introd.*, p. 323.

† *Ib.*, p. 414.

‡ *Ib.*, p. 305.

§ Thus Coleridge speaks of Jacob Behmen, *Biogr. Liter.*, vol. i., p. 96; see also p. 90. Baur's *Gnosis*, pp. 557—611. Heinroth: *von d. Grundfehlern der Erziehung*, 1828, p. 415.

|| We observe two new biographies of Jacob Böhme, among the latest German works.

as has been to our knowledge admitted by some of those concerned. The very name Gnosis reminds one of the claim to direct knowledge of the absolute; but the parallel may be carried out in almost every particular of the two classes of opinion. This has been done in a profound manner by the learned Baur, in his work on the Gnosis of the Christian church. He has traced out at full length the horrid pictures of the Valentinians and the Ophites; of Marcion and the admirers of the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies; he has set over against this the portraiture of Böhme, of Fichte, of Schelling, and of Hegel; and, comparing their respective lineaments, has revealed a likeness as striking as it is frightful. This he does moreover not as an enemy, but as an adoring devotee of the new theogony. He shows the remarkable coincidence between Schelling and Böhme, and between both and the Gnostics: and he makes the analogy no less apparent in the case of Hegel.\* In all these schemes, the initiated are invited to an esoteric vision of truth, a Gnosis which the common herd cannot attain: in all, the promise is, Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. The conflicting sects agree in this, and in a consequent contempt for what they call popular, experimental, or empirical philosophy.† As there are certain limits to intellectual powers, which the immortal Locke endeavoured to ascertain, and beyond which we float in the region of midnight, so those who have forgotten these cautions have in their most original speculations only reproduced the delirium of other times, which in the cycle of opinion has come back upon us “like a phantasma or a hideous dream.”‡ In the French imitation, no less than the German original, there is a perpetual self-delusion practised by the philosopher, who plays with words as a child with lettered cards, and combines what ought to be the symbols of thought, into expressions unmeaning and self-contradictory.§ And as in this operation he cannot

\* Die christliche Gnosis, oder die christliche Religions-Philosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung. Von Dr. Ferdinand Christian Baur. Tübingen, 1835. In this elaborate work of Professor Baur, nearly two hundred pages are devoted to the exhibition of the parallel between the modern seers and the frantic Ophites and other transcendentalists of the primitive age. Let the reader suspend his judgment until he shall have inquired into the justice of this comparison.

† Hegel gives himself great amusement at the English acceptance of the word Philosophy. He alludes to Lord Brougham's having, in a speech in parliament, spoken of “the philosophical principles of free trade.” He attributes a similar expression to Canning; and gives the following as the title of a recent English book, viz., “The Art of Preserving the Hair, on Philosophical Principles.”—Hegel's *Encyclopædie*, pp. 11, 12.

‡ When we look at the prodigious speculations of the schoolmen, we find expressions highly transcendental. Even Hegel is shorn of his originality, and Pantheism is discovered among the lucubrations of the dark ages. Thus, Joannes Erigena says of the divine nature: “Deus est omne quod vere est; quoniam ipse facit omnia, et fit in omnibus; omne enim quod intelligitur et sentitur, nihil aliud est, nisi non apparentis apparitio, occulti manifestatio, negati affirmatio, etc.”—*De Divisione Naturæ*, lib. ii., p. 80. Here we have Pantheism. Again, “Per nihilum ex quo omnia creata esse scriptura dicit, intelligo ineffabilem et incomprehensibilem divinæ naturæ inaccessibilemque claritatem, omnibus intellectibus sive humanis sive angelicis inaccessibiliter incognitam.” Lib. iii., p. 127, apud Rixner, vol. ii., pp. 13—15.

§ “Little did Leibnitz, Wolf, &c., believe that the language of science would be-



but be aware that these expressions are the exponents of no conceptions of the intellect, he demands, as the only possible prop of his system, a specific faculty for the absolute, the unconditioned, and—may we not add—the absurd! Thus Fichte asked of all such as would aspire to his primary, free and creative act of the Ich or Ego, a certain power called the Anschauungsvermögen. It is the want of these optics, alas! which spoils us for philosophers. Reinhold, who often combated, and sometimes rallied, his old friend, avowed that he was utterly destitute of this sense; a misfortune, adds M. Degerando, common to him with all the rest of the world.\* It is, however, the happy portion of the absolute Philosophers, the Behmenites, the Gnostics, the Soofies, the Buddhists, and a few of the Americans.

It would afford a subject for many more pages than we can allot to this whole discussion, to compare the new philosophy with that of the oriental mystics. We look with amazement at the exact reproduction of almost every eastern error in the musings of Europe. It should seem that no form of profane absurdity can ever finally die out of the world, until the great suggester of them all shall be cast into hell. Pantheism has by some been regarded as the mother of Polytheism; but mother and daughter have loved to dwell together, and the parent has in many cases survived the child. This form of error prevails widely among the Soofies of Persia, and the Buddhists of the remoter east, as well as in countless minor sects in that nursery of

All monstrous, all prodigious things,  
Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,  
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimaeras dire.

Two valuable works of Tholuck relate to this subject: the one being a treatise on the Pantheism of Persia,† the other an Anthology of Oriental Mystic Poems.‡ There is scarcely a page of these volumes which does not show something to identify the ancient and eastern with the modern Pantheism. The resemblance is declared by the learned and pious author, who has a decided leaning towards the mystical philosophy. Hegel himself cites this Anthology, with acknowledgment of the same truth, complimenting Tholuck for his genial disposition towards profound philosophy, and at the same time lamenting his still remaining prejudice and narrowness.§ Among these Mohammedan heretics, the Soofies, we find the declaration that God is everything; *nihil esse praeter*

come a witch-jargon (Hexensprache) which we should learn like parrots."—Herder Metakritik, ii., 74.

\* Life of Fichte, by M. Eyriès.

† Ssufismus: sive Theosophia Persarum Pantheistica, etc. Frid. Aug. Deofidus Tholuck. Berolini, 1821.

‡ Bluethensammlung aus der Morgenländischen Mystik, u. s. w. von F. A. G. Tholuck. Berlin, 1825.

§ Encyclopaedie, p. 592, note.

*Deum*.\* We have also the mental gaze of intuition, the absolute *Anschauung*.† We have creation represented as a necessary emanation from the divinity.‡ We have the absorption of all self in God.§ We have, ever and anon, the same glorification of nihility, *das Nichts*; || and, as if no plague-spot of the pestiferous philosophy should be wanting, we have complete Hegelianism in the doctrine that sin is no evil, nay, from one sect of transcendental Persians, that sin is even preferable to holiness.¶

Every reader of the common religious news is informed that millions of the Indian and Indo-Chinese people are Pantheists. Hegel dwells on this, and quotes the *Bhagavad Gita*, in which Krishna is introduced thus speaking: "I am the breath which dwells in the body of the living; I am the beginning, and the midst of the living, and also their end. I am, under the stars, the radiant sun, under the lunar signs, the moon," &c., &c. He denies, however, that in this there is proper Pantheism, as he also denies it of his own system.\*\* It would be difficult to deny it of the books of the Vedam. "The school of Vedantam," say the Roman Catholic missionaries in China, "has an authority superior to that of all the others. It professes, as the fundamental principle of its doctrine, the opinion of the simple unity of one existing essence, which is nothing but the *Ego*, or soul. Nothing exists except this *Ego* in its simple unity; this essence is in some sort *trine*, by its existence, by its infinite light and supreme joy; all is here eternal, immaterial, infinite. But because the inner experience of the *Ego* is not conformed to this beautiful idea, they admit another principle, but purely negative [*das Nichts*], and which, consequently, has no reality of being; this is the *Maya* of the *Ego*, that is, *the error*. The key for the deliverance of the soul is in these words, which these false philosophers have to repeat incessantly, with a pride beyond that of Lucifer: *I am the Supreme Being*, *Aham ava param Brahma*."†† We could not ask a more lucid or comprehensive view of the modern German system; for even if the missionaries invented what they say, they have, in their invention, anticipated

\* *Ssufismus*, p. 222.

† *Blüthensammlung*, p. 116. See also p. 198, where Tholuck says, "Here we have in simple terms the results of the loftiest speculations of modern times. From contrast and comparison the infinite can never be learned."

‡ *Ssufismus*, p. 173, ff.

§ *Ib.*, p. 64. "Dixit aliquando Bustami Deo: Quamdiu, mi Deus, inter Egoitatem et Tuitatem me manere vis, remove Egoitatem et Tuitatem ut Ego nihil fiam." And in the *Blüthensammlung*, Mewlana Dschelaleddin Rumi, a Persian poet, "follows (says Tholuck) the pantheistic-mystic view, that all revelations in all religions are alike true, as being different, gradual, evolutions of God," &c.—P. 69. So at pp. 87, 88, 89, are exhibitions of the blindest pantheistic fatalism.

|| *Blüthens.*, p. 66, note 1.

¶ *Blüthensammlung*, p. 123, note 1, p. 134, note 1, where Tholuck controverts this absurd doctrine with proper warmth.

\*\* Hegel's *Encyk.*, p. 586.

†† *Choix des Lettres édifiantes*, Paris, 1809, t. iv., p. 246, ap. Tholuck's *Ssufismus*, p. 214.

the grandest result of Schelling and Hegel.\* And the Luciferian pride engendered in the Chinese is precisely the temper which is manifested by those of the Indo-Germanic school who have come to the conclusion that God never arrives at so high a degree of self-consciousness (to use their jargon) as in their own minds. When applied to the doctrines of revealed Christianity, these dogmas produce a portentous mixture. We then learn that the Messiah, or God-man, is self-developing humanity—the race at large. On this topic many illustrations might be offered; one of these, from a popular poet of genius, we throw into the margin, as neither caring nor daring to translate it: “but let him that readeth understand.”†

So far as M. Cousin is concerned, we are ready to concede to him the possession of learning and genius. But his philosophy, as far as he has developed it, is to the last degree superficial and conceited. Making great pretensions to extraordinary profoundness, it does in truth but skim the surface of things, and then fly off into thin and unmeaning abstractions. The “witch jargon” which it employs, when you have taken infinite pains to penetrate it in a given case, is often found to contain only some old truth, swathed and bandaged in this hieroglyphic dress. And one known truth thus prepared, is then “made use of, to pass off a thousand nothings with.” There is not, and in consistency with the first principles of this philosophy there cannot be, any attempt at ratiocination. It is a string of assumptions, and of assertions of the most unqualified and dogmatic kind. The reader cannot have failed to remark, in the extracts we have given, the peculiar kind of generalization in which M. Cousin habitually indulges. Because England is an island, therefore everything in England stops short of its proper development, and England can make no valuable contributions to science. Because in religion, God is everything and man is nothing, therefore no religious man can be a great man. Thus on all occasions he takes but a single step from the narrowest possible premises, from vague analogies, and sometimes from nothing more solid than verbal puns, to the most wide and peremptory

\* We should, perhaps, have said before, that Kant is altogether exempt from the charge of Pantheism, representing God as “not by any means a blind, acting, eternal *Nature*, the Root of all things, but a supreme Being, who by understanding and freedom is the author of all things.—See Jacobi, u. s., p. 114.

† Drum bitt' ich, vor der Hand den Prediger  
Auf seinem Berge ungekränkt zu lassen,  
Doch dass beschwor' ich, so gewiss das Alte  
Der Alten nicht mehr neulebendig wird:  
Der Mann, in welchem Gott war—Gott wird leben!—  
Der Mann, wer er dereinst zu euch herabsteigt,  
Und zweifach, dreifach, millionenfach  
Bei euch als Mensch, als alle Menschen lebt:  
Er wird nicht dreifach goldne Kronen tragen,  
Er wird in's Knopfloch keinen Orden knüpfen,  
Er wird der Herr von Bethlehem nicht heissen,  
Er wird nicht weibesbaar im Kloster singen, u. s. w.

Laienbrevier von Leopold Schefer. Berlin, 1835.



conclusions. A hundred times, in passing over his pages, we have been constrained to ask, is this philosophy, or is it poetry? It can surely make no pretensions to the one, and it is but sorry stuff if meant for the other.

But the philosophical defects of this system do not constitute its chief point of repulsion. We have a wide charity for what seems to us nonsense, and we can even extend an amiable and silent tolerance to the pretensions of those who utter it, to be the depositories of all wisdom. But when this nonsense begins to ape the German impiety, when it openly professes to cast off all subordination to religion, and prates in dogmatic superiority to divine revelation, we cannot but lift up our solemn protest against it. It has been made sufficiently evident that the philosophy of M. Cousin removes the God of the Bible, and substitutes in his stead a philosophical abstraction; that it rejects the scriptures, and thus robs us of our dearest hopes; and that, in common with other like systems, it erects a false standard in morals, and confounds the distinction between right and wrong. We cannot, therefore, behold in silence the efforts which are making to introduce this system of abominations among us.

It has already made some progress. The "Introduction to the History of Philosophy" was translated and published in 1832, by M. Linberg. The first edition of the "Elements of Psychology" was published in 1834, and having been adopted, as the translator informs us, "as a text-book in several of our most respectable colleges and universities," a new edition is now issued which has been expressly "prepared for the use of colleges." It might be well if the names of these most respectable colleges and universities were made known to the public. We should like to know which of our public seminaries of education has so far distinguished itself in point of science as to take, for its text-book on mental philosophy, an immethodized set of criticisms upon Locke. The work of M. Cousin does not pretend to the order and method of a scientific treatise; it only claims to be a criticism upon the defects and errors of the sensual Philosophy. It formed a part of the author's regular course of lectures upon the History of Philosophy of the 18th century. And has it really come to this pass with any of our most respectable colleges and universities, that they are using fragments of historical treatises as text-books upon science? Do they also learn the Newtonian Philosophy from Clarke's criticisms upon Rohault's Physics? And is Varignon's reply to Rolle their text-book upon the Differential Calculus?

But, for more urgent considerations than those of science, is it important that these most respectable colleges and universities should be known to the public. Most of the extracts which we have given from M. Cousin have been taken from his Introduction to the History of Philosophy, and yet it will be seen that some of the worst of them have been furnished by what Dr. Henry has dignified with the title of Elements of Psychology. And this

latter work implicitly contains them all, since it teaches, in their application to criticism upon Locke, the same principles which, in other modes of their application, yield the results which we have exhibited. It should be known, therefore, what college or university dares assume the responsibility of instilling the principles of this book into the minds of the young men committed to its care. Where are these literary institutions that are so ambitious to commence the work of flooding the land with German infidelity and pantheism? If they are willing to undertake the work, they will doubtless, in a measure, succeed. There is something in this new philosophy which will recommend it to many, and especially to young men. It has the charm of novelty. It affects to be very profound. It puts into the mouths of its disciples a peculiar language, and imparts to them a knowledge which none others can attain. It gives them the privilege of despising all others, and makes them incommensurable with any standard of criticism but their own. If pursued and pressed by argument, they have but to rail, as their master does, at "the paltry measure of Locke's philosophy," and ridicule the bounded, insular character of all science except that in which they are adepts. It flatters the pride of the youthful heart, it takes captive the imagination, and, a still more dangerous recommendation, it tends to lighten and remove the restraints of passion. It recognises no standard of right and wrong but the reason of man, and permits no appeal from the decisions of humanity to the authority of the one living and true God. While it retains the name of God, and does not therefore at once startle and shock the feelings like open atheism, it teaches its disciples to deify themselves and nature, and to look upon all phenomena alike, whether of the material universe or of the mind of man, as manifestations of the Deity. Every emotion of the heart is an acting forth of God, and every indulgence of a passion, however depraved, becomes an act of worship.\* The man who exercises in any way, according to his inspired impulses, his body or his mind, even though God is not in all his thoughts, is really rendering to Him as acceptable service, as if his heart were filled with emotions of adoration and reverence. The forge of every smithy, as Thomas Carlyle has taught us, is an altar, and the smith, labouring in his vocation, is a priest offering sacrifice to God.

Such being the recommendations of this philosophy, it cannot be doubted that it will find many willing disciples, some attracted by one set of its charms, and some by another. If any of our most respectable colleges have engaged in teaching it, they will not find refractory pupils. But we warn them that when this

\* See ample evidence of this base and diabolical tendency of the doctrine of Pantheism, in an article in Professor Hengstenberg's *Journal* for November, 1836, entitled, *Bericht über ein Pantheistisches Trifolium*. For example, as we have said elsewhere, we learn, that Schefer and his compeers teach "that sin is the hither aspect of that which, on the other side of the heart, is entirely laudable."

system shall have worked out, as work it must, its pernicious and loathsome results; when our young men shall have been taught to despise the wisdom of their elders, and renounce the reverence and submission which the human intellect owes to God; when, in the pride and vainglory of their hearts, they shall make bold question of the truths which their fathers have held most dear and sacred; when the Holy Bible shall be treated as the mere playground of antic and impious fancies, and an undisguised Pantheism shall spread its poison through our literature; then shall they who have now stepped forth to introduce this philosophy among us, be held to a heavy responsibility. Are these idle fears? They are at least real. We believe; therefore do we speak. And we point the incredulous to the gradations of folly and wickedness, through which this same philosophy has led the German mind. If neither the internal evidence of the system, nor the lights of ancient and modern experience, are sufficient for conviction, we can only appeal to the verdict that time will give. In the meanwhile every parent and guardian in the land has an interest in knowing which of our colleges are making experiment of the effects of this philosophy upon the minds of the young men entrusted to their care.\*

We have another alarming symptom of its progress among us, in the Address delivered in July last, by the Rev. Ralph Waldo Emerson, before the Senior Class in Divinity, at Harvard University. This address is before us. We have read it, and we want words with which to express our sense of the nonsense and impiety which pervade it. It is a rhapsody, obviously in imitation of Thomas Carlyle, and possessing as much of the vice of his mannerism as the author could borrow, but without his genius. The interest which it possesses for us arises from its containing the application of the Transcendental Philosophy, in the form of instruction to young men about to go forth as preachers of Christianity. The principles upon which Mr. Emerson proceeds, so far as he states them, are the same with those of M. Cousin. We find the same conception of the Deity as the substratum of all things, the same attributes assigned to the reason, and the same claim of inspiration for every man. But here we have a somewhat more distinct avowal of the results to which these principles lead, in their application to Christianity, than M. Cousin

\* How the writers of "Young Germany" regard the religious tendencies of their coevals, may be gathered from the extravagant and wicked writings of Heine. After saying, in his "Allemagne," that Pantheism was the ancient faith of the Teutons, and that "man parts not willingly with what has been dear to his fathers," he says (we ask that it may be duly noted), "Germany is at present the fertile soil of Pantheism; that is the religion of all our greatest thinkers, of all our best artists—and Deism is already destroyed there in theory. You do not hear it spoken of—but every one knows it. Pantheism is the public secret of Germany. We have in fact outgrown Deism." Again: "Deism is a good religion for slaves, for children, for Genevieve, for watch-makers."—"Pantheism is the hidden religion of Germany; and this result was well foreseen by those German writers who, fifty years ago, let loose such a storm of fury against Spinoza."—See *Quarterly Review*, vol. lv., for December, 1835, pp. 7, 8, 12.



has seen fit to give us. What we had charged upon the system, before reading this pamphlet, as being fairly and logically involved in its premises, we have here found avowed by one of its own advocates. Thus we have said that if the notion which it gives us of God is correct, then he who is concerned in the production of any phenomenon, who employs his agency in any manner, in kindling a fire or uttering a prayer, does thereby manifest the Deity, and render to him religious worship. This consequence is frankly avowed and taught by Mr. Emerson. Speaking of the "religious sentiment," he says: "It is a mountain air. It is the embalmer of the world. It is myrrh, and storax, and chlorine, and rosemary. It makes the sky and the hills sublime, and the silent song of the stars is it." And again, he tells us: "Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told. Somehow he publishes it with solemn joy. Sometimes, with pencil on canvass, sometimes with chisel on stone; sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul's worship is builded." He even admonishes us that the time is coming when men shall be taught to believe in "the identity of the law of gravitation, with purity of heart." To show that this tree of knowledge resembles that in Eden in one respect, that it has a tempter beside it, we have but to quote at random from Mr. Emerson's Address. "Man is the wonder-worker. He is seen amid miracles. The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man, indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was: that he speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity—a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of man—is lost. None believeth in the soul of man, but only in some man or person old and departed." He complains grievously of this want of faith in the infinitude of the soul; he cries out because "man is ashamed of himself, and skulks and sneaks through the world:" and utters the pathetic plaint, "In how many churches, and by how many prophets, tell me, is man made sensible that he is an infinite soul; that the earth and the heavens are passing into his mind; that he is drinking for ever the soul of God?" Miracles, in the proper sense of the word, are of course discarded. "The very word miracle, he tells us, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression. It is Monster; it is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain." And when Christ spoke of miracles, it was only because he knew "that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth." Jesus Christ is made the mere symbol of a man who had full faith in the soul, who believed in the infinitude of our nature, and who thus assists in admonishing us "that the gleams which flash across our minds, are not ours, but God's." Any man may now become Christ, for "a true conversion, a true Christ is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments."\* There is not

\* "Our world," says Lichtenberg, a witty German philosopher, "will yet grow so refined, that it will be just as ridiculous to believe in a God, as now-a-days in

a single truth or sentiment in this whole Address that is borrowed from the scriptures. And why should there be? Mr. Emerson, and all men, are as truly inspired as the penmen of the sacred volume. Indeed he expressly warns the candidates for the ministry, whom he was addressing, to look only into their own souls for the truth. He has himself succeeded thus in discovering many truths that are not to be found in the Bible; as, for instance, "that the gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet natural goodness like thine and mine, and that thus invites thine and mine, to be, and to grow." The present mode of interpreting Christianity, even under the form of Unitarianism, he abhors as utterly repugnant to reason, and insufficient for the wants of our nature; he stigmatizes it as a historical traditional Christianity, that has its origin in past revelations, instead of placing its faith in new ones; and "like the zodiac of Denderah, and the astronomical monuments of the Hindoos, it is wholly insulated from anything now extant in the life and business of the people." He treats Christianity as a Mythos, like the creeds of Pagan Greece and Rome, and does not even pay it sufficient respect under this aspect to be at the trouble of interpreting for us more than a few of the hidden meanings that lie concealed under its allegorical forms. In a word, Mr. Emerson is an infidel philosopher, who nevertheless makes use, in the esoteric sense of the new philosophy, of the terms and phrases consecrated to a religious use.\* We have at least to thank him, on behalf of those whose eyes might not otherwise have been opened, for giving us so distinct and ample an illustration of the kind of service which M. Cousin professes himself willing to render to Christianity by means of his philosophy. We would call public attention to this Address, as the first fruits of transcendentalism in our country. We hold it up as a warning evidence of the nature of the tree which has produced it.

We know not with what degree of favour Mr. Emerson's rhapsody was received by those to whom it was addressed; but we are pleased to learn that it was offensive to the authorities of the university. Professor Ware has since delivered and published a

Ghosts. And then after a while, the world will grow more refined still. And so it will go on, with great rapidity, to the utmost summit of refinement. Having attained the pinnacle, the judgment of the wise will be reversed; knowledge will change itself for the last time. Then—and this will be the end—then shall we believe in nothing but ghosts. We shall ourselves be like God. We shall know that essence or existence is and can be nothing but—a phantom."—*Vermischte Schriften*, b. 1, s. 166.

\* It is within the compass of the transcendental philosophy to accommodate itself to any form of religion, and appropriate its language. Schelling himself, and some of his disciples, who had been educated in the Protestant faith, embraced, it is said, the Romish religion, and formed within its pale, a sort of inner church, whose symbol and watchword was the name of the Virgin Mary. We have shown it among the Ophites, the Soofies, and the Chinese. Mr. Bancroft has, with distinctness, laid it open in the scheme of early Quakers (*History*, vol. ii, chap. 16), and it is now proffered to us by a clergyman of a church, to say the least, as little tinctured with this sort of poison as any in Christendom.

sermon, containing an earnest and strong defence of the personality of the Deity.\* In obvious allusion to Mr. Emerson, he thus expresses his opinion: "Strange as it may seem to Christian ears that have been accustomed to far other expressions of the Divinity, there have been those who maintain this idea; who hold that the principles which govern the universe are the Deity; that power, wisdom, veracity, justice, benevolence, are God; that gravitation, light, electricity, are God." We noticed too, some months since, in one of our public papers, a severe rebuke of Mr. Emerson, which was attributed to another of the Professors of the university.† This, then, cannot be one of "the most respectable colleges and universities," which have adopted the *Elements of Psychology* as their text-book on mental science.‡

It is suited to excite a feeling of surprise, not unmingled with sorrow, that a system of philosophy, which, in its immediate and natural results, is indignantly repudiated by Unitarians, should be urged upon us, with high praise of its merits, by an accredited minister, and a Doctor in Divinity, of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We are willing to believe that he knows not what he is doing; that fascinated by the first charms of the new philosophy, or perchance dazzled by the brilliancy of a correspondence with a Peer of France, and the great founder of Eclecticism, he is not able to see the end from the beginning. But this excuse, the only one that we can make for him, increases our apprehension. M. Cousin informs him, in a letter which has been given in several different forms to the public, that he "shall watch with the liveliest interest, the progress of philosophy in America," and that in one of the works which he intends yet to publish, he "will endeavour to be useful to America." In the meantime, he says to Dr. Henry, "it is with great pleasure that I see you resolved to establish yourself in the State of New York, where public instruction is so far advanced, but where philosophy is yet so very languishing: it will be your duty to re-animate it, to give it a strong impulse." Dr. Henry has taken care to inform the public that he has been honoured with this commission from the great head of the sect; it has been published and re-published until the whole nation have learned that he has been consecrated by no less a personage

\* The Personality of the Deity. A Sermon, preached in the Chapel of Harvard University, September 23, 1838. By Henry Ware, Jr., Professor of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral Care. Published at the request of the members of the Divinity School. Boston: 1838.

† A paragraph has fallen under our eye, while writing this, which informs us that this same Mr. Emerson has received so much encouragement for what are softly called "his daring and imaginative speculations," from the people of Boston, that he is now engaged in the delivery of a course of public Lectures upon them.

‡ Since the body of this article was completely written, we have received the *Christian Review*, of Boston, in which there is a notice of the system of Cousin. We are encouraged by these signs of healthful resistance, and corroborated in our judgment, by finding that the author of this sound and conclusive review, who has evidently seen the monster in its native German forests, recognises its tracks in the attempts of M. Cousin.



than M. Cousin, to the duty of re-animating our philosophy. Can he now abandon this work, and leave the duty assigned him to be performed by any meaner hand? We fear not. We fear that if any misgivings should cross his mind, they will give place to assurance with the arrival of the next packet that shall bring a letter and a presentation copy of some new work from M. Cousin, or even at the very thought of such an arrival.

If our augury should prove right, we, too, will watch his labours. We read the Introduction to the "History of Philosophy," and the "Elements of Psychology," upon their first appearance, but we kept silence because we did not wish in any degree to draw public attention to them until evidence was afforded that they were read. We now have this evidence, and have felt it our duty to be no longer silent. But, having done so, we gladly desist from the attempt to trace the pedigree or indicate the family traits of these various systems. Be they Indian, Teutonic, or French, we regard them alike with fear, as if some demon were bent on playing fantastic tricks with poor, proud, purblind man. We pretend not, as we have said, to comprehend these dogmas. We know not what they are: but we know what they are not. They are not the truth of God; nay, they gainsay that truth at every step. They are, if anything can be, profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.\* So far as received, they rob us of our most cherished hopes, and take away our God. No one who has ever heard such avowals can forget the touching manner in which pious as well as celebrated German scholars have sometimes lamented their still lingering doubts as to the personality of God. But while these systems rob us of our religious faith, they despoil us of our reason. Let those who will rehearse to us the empty babble about reason as a faculty of immediate insight of the infinite; we will trust no faculty which, like eastern princes, mounts the throne over the corpses of its brethren. We cannot sacrifice our understanding. If we are addressed by appeals to consciousness, to intuition, we will try those appeals. If we are addressed by reasoning, we will endeavour to go along with that reasoning. But in what is thus offered, there is no ratiocination;† there is endless assertion, not merely of unproved, but of unreasonable, of contradictory, of absurd propositions. And if any, overcome by the *prestige* of the new philosophy, as transatlantic, or as new, are ready to repeat dogmas which neither they nor the inventors of them can comprehend, and which approach the dia-

\* The original is pregnant: τὰς βεβήλους κενοφωνίας καὶ ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως.

† Bretschneider, though a German, seems to have felt this. "It would be unreasonable," says he of Schelling, "to demand a *proof* of such a system. For as *to prove*, means but this—to deduce something true, from something else previously known as true, there can here be no such thing as proof from higher principles, since we seek the *first truth* from which all others are deduced." Bretsch. Grundasnicht, p. 7.

lect of Bedlam, we crave to be exempt from the number, and will contentedly abstain for life from "the high priori road." The more we have looked at it, the more we have been convinced of its emptiness and fatuity. It proves nothing; it determines nothing; or where it seems to have results, they are hideous and godless. Moreover, we think we speak the sentiment of a large body of scholars in our country, when we say, that if we must have a transatlantic philosophy, we desire to have it in its native robustness and freshness. We do not wish to have it through the medium of French declaimers, nor of the French language, than which no tongue is less fit to convey the endless distinctions of the German. We wish to have it before it has undergone two or three transmutations; not from subalterns, but from masters. We do not wish to have a philosophy already effete, long since refuted and heartily denounced by the best men in the country of its origin; and above all, we do not wish to have a philosophy which shall conduct our young scholars into the high road to Atheism. We learn with pain that among the Unitarians of Boston and its vicinity, there are those who affect to embrace the pantheistic creed. The time may not be far off, when some new Emerson shall preach Pantheism under the banner of self-styled Calvinism; or when, with formularies as sound as those of Germany, some author among ourselves may, like Dinter, address his reader thus, O thou Son of God! For the tendency of German philosophizing is towards impious temerity. We have long deplored the spread of Socinianism, but there is no form of Socinianism, or of rational Deism, which is not immeasurably to be preferred to the German insanity. In fine, we cleave with more tenacity than ever to the mode of philosophizing which has for several generations prevailed among our British ancestors; and especially to that Oracle in which we read, what the investigation of this subject has impressed on us with double force, that God will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent; that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and that when men change the truth of God into a lie, he will give them over to a reprobate mind.

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Our readers are probably aware that the Unitarian clergymen of Boston and its vicinity, priding themselves in the name of liberal Christians, have never professed to agree entirely among themselves in their doctrinal views.\* Of late, however, a portion of

\* The remaining portion of this essay originally appeared as a separate article, in review of a work entitled, "A Discourse on the Latest Form of Infidelity, delivered at the request of the Association of the Alumni of the Cambridge Theological School, on the 19th of July, 1839, with notes. By Andrews Norton."

"A Letter to Mr. Andrews Norton, occasioned by his Discourse before the Asso-

their number have advanced sentiments which, in the apprehension of the rest, exceed even the limits of the most liberal Christianity. Hence Mr. Norton's Discourse on the Latest Form of Infidelity. The pamphlets before us do not enable us to ascertain precisely what this new form of infidelity is, nor how far it is embraced by the Boston clergy. We know, indeed, that it has its origin in German philosophy, and that the Rev. Mr. Emerson delivered an address before the same association which listened to Mr. Norton's discourse, which was a rhapsodical oration in favour of Pantheism. We know, also, that that oration called forth an earnest remonstrance and disclaimer from some of the friends and officers of the Cambridge school of theology. The public papers moreover informed us that Mr. Emerson delivered, with some applause, a series of popular lectures on the new philosophy, to the good people of Boston. We are, however, ignorant both as to the number of those who embrace this new philosophy, and as to the extent to which they carry it. It may be inferred from Mr. Norton's discourse, that he considered his opponents as denying either the possibility of a miracle, or the truth of the New Testament history in reference to the miracles of Christ. Why else should he make the truth of the evangelical history, and the absolute necessity of a belief in miracles in order to faith in Christianity, the burden of his discourse? "The latest form of infidelity," he says, "is distinguished by assuming a Christian name, while it strikes directly at the root of faith in Christianity, and indirectly of all religion, by denying the miracles attesting the divine mission of Christ."\* On another page, he says, "Christianity claims to reveal facts, a knowledge of which is essential to the moral and spiritual regeneration of men, and to offer in attestation of those facts, the only satisfactory proof, the authority of God, evidenced by miraculous displays of his power."† Again: "If it were not for the abuse of language that has prevailed, it would be idle to say, in denying the miracles of Christianity, the truth of Christianity is denied. It has been vaguely alleged, that the internal evidences of our religion are sufficient, and that the miraculous proof is not wanted; but this can be said by no one who understands what Christianity is, and what its internal evidences are."‡

These quotations are sufficient to exhibit the two prominent doctrines of the discourse, viz., that miracles are the only satisfactory evidence of a divine revelation; and that the denial of the miracles of Christianity is a denial of Christianity itself. These doctrines are not necessarily connected. For, although it is certain that if the former is true, the latter must be true also; it does not follow that if the former is false, the latter must be false. It may

ciation of the Alumni of the Cambridge Theological School, on the 19th of July, 1839. By an Alumnus of that School."

\* Discourse, p. 11.

† Ibid., p. 18.

‡ Ibid., p. 21.



be incorrect, as it doubtless is, to make miracles the only satisfactory proof of Christianity, and yet it may be perfectly correct to say that a denial of the miracles of Christ is a denial of the Gospel; not because the only sufficient proof of the truth of the Gospel is denied, but because the miraculous character of the Gospel enters into its very essence. The advent, the person, the resurrection of Christ, were all miraculous. He cannot be believed upon, without believing a miracle. Revelation is itself a miracle. All the words of Christ suppose the truth of his miracles. They can, therefore, no more be separated from his religion than the warp and woof can be separated, and yet the cloth remain entire. The apostle expressly teaches us, that if the resurrection of Christ be denied, the whole Gospel is denied. While, therefore, we dissent from Mr. Norton as to his first proposition, we fully agree with him as to the second.

The obvious objection to the doctrine, that miracles are the only adequate proof of divine revelation, is, that the great majority of Christians, who are incapable of examining the evidence on which the miracles rest, are thus left without any sufficient ground of faith. This objection does not escape Mr. Norton's attention. His answer is the same as that given by Catholic priests and high churchmen everywhere, viz., they must believe on trust, or as he prefers to express it, on the testimony of those who are competent to examine the evidence in question. As they are forced to believe a thousand things, without personal examination, on the testimony of others, he thinks it not unreasonable that they should receive their religion on the same terms. If they believe that the earth turns round because astronomers tell them so, why may they not believe that the Gospel is true because learned men vouch for the fact? It is hardly necessary to remark, that every Christian knows that such is not the foundation of his faith: he has firmer ground on which to rest the destiny of his soul. He does not believe Grotius or Paley; he believes God himself, speaking in his word. The evidence of the truth is in the truth itself. The proposition, that the whole is greater than a part, is believed for its own sake. And to higher intellects, truths, at which we arrive by a laborious process, appear in their own light, as axioms appear to us. So also with regard to morals. There are some propositions which every human being sees to be true, the moment they are announced. There are others which must be proved to him. And the higher the moral cultivation or purity of the soul is carried, the wider is the range of this moral intuition. So also with regard to religious truth. That God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth; that he is not a Jupiter, or a Moloch, is believed with an intimate conviction which no argument nor external evidence can possibly produce. It is believed for its own sake. It cannot be understood or perceived in its own nature without the persua-

sion of its truth rising in the mind. No man believes that malignity is wrong on external authority; and no man believes that God is good, because it can be logically demonstrated. The ground of faith in moral truth, from the nature of the case, is the perception of the nature of the truth believed. It is seen and felt to be true. That one man does not see a proposition in morals to be true, can have no effect upon him who does perceive it. And the only way to produce conviction in the mind of him who doubts or disbelieves, is to remove the darkness which prevents the perception of the truth to be believed. If seen in its true nature, it is believed; just as beauty is believed as soon as seen. "Faith is no work of reason, and therefore cannot be overthrown by it, since believing no more arises from arguments than tasting or seeing."\*

It is very true that the great majority of men have no such perception of the peculiar truths of the Gospel as produces this unwavering faith. The only belief that they have rests on tradition, or prejudice, or, in the learned few, on the external evidences of the Gospel. The reason of this fact, however, is not that the doctrines in question do not contain the evidence of their own truth, but that the minds of the majority of men are not in a state to perceive it. What is the reason that savages do not perceive many things to be wrong, the moral turpitude of which is to us a matter of intuition? The reason lies in the state of their minds. So, also, the "natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual discerneth all things." The spiritual man, then (that is, the man under the influence of the Spirit of God), discerns the excellence of the things of the Spirit; and he receives them because he does discern them. He sees the excellence of the divine character; the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ; the perfection of the divine law; the accordance of the declarations of God with his own experience; the suitableness of the plan of salvation to his necessities, and to the perfections of God. He feels the power which attends these truths in his own soul, and his faith, therefore, rests not on the wisdom of man, but on the power of God. It must be remembered that the Bible is a whole. The believer sees these doctrines everywhere, and he therefore believes the whole. One portion of scripture supposes and confirms another. The authority of the ancient prophets, of Christ, and of the apostles, is one and indivisible. As the prophets testified of Christ, so he testified of them. As Christ testified to the apostles, so did they testify of him. The object of the believer's faith, therefore, is the whole Bible. He sees everywhere the same God, the same law, the same Saviour,

\* Der Glaube ist kein Werk der Vernunft, kann also auch keinen Angriffen derselben unterliegen, weil Glauben so wenig durch Gründe geschieht, als Schmecken und Sehen.

the same plan of redemption. He believes the whole, because it is one glorious system of effulgent truth.

As this is the doctrine of the Bible on this subject, so it is also the doctrine of the church. Were it our present object to establish this point, the correctness of the above statement could be easily proved. We cannot forbear, however, to quote the following beautiful passage from the Westminster Confession: "We may be moved and induced," says that venerable symbol, "by the testimony of the church, to an high and reverend esteem for the holy scripture; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery which it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the truth in our hearts."

Owen wrote a treatise on this subject which bears the impress of his sound and vigorous understanding, as well as of his intimate acquaintance with the nature of true religion.\* In his *Treatise on the Reason of Faith*, he says: "The formal reason of faith, divine and supernatural, whereby we believe the scriptures to be the word of God, in the way of duty, as it is required of us, is the authority and veracity of God alone, evidencing themselves unto our minds and consciences in and by the scripture itself. And herein consisteth that divine testimony of the Holy Spirit, which, as it is a testimony, gives our assent unto the scripture the general nature of faith, and, as it is a divine testimony, gives it the especial nature of faith divine and supernatural.

"This divine testimony given unto the divine original of the sacred scriptures, in and by itself, wherein our faith is ultimately resolved, is evidenced and made known, as by the character of the infinite perfections of the divine nature, which are in and upon it; so by the authority, power, and efficacy, over and upon the souls and consciences of men, and the satisfactory excellence of the truths contained therein, wherewith it is accompanied."

This view of the ground of faith is confirmed by the experience and testimony of the people of God in all ages.

It is a monstrous idea that the thousands of illiterate saints who have entered eternity in the full assurance of hope, had no better foundation for their faith than the testimony of the learned to the truth of the Bible. Let the advocates of such an opinion ask the pious believer why he believes the word of God, and they will find

\* See his work on the *Divine Authority, Self-Evidencing Light and Power of the Scriptures*, with an answer to the inquiry, *How we know the Scriptures to be the word of God?*



he can give some better reason for the hope that is in him than the faith or testimony of others. Let them try the resources of their philosophy, empirical or transcendental, on a faith founded on the testimony of the Holy Spirit, by and with the truth; let them try the effect of demonstrating that such and such doctrines cannot be true; they will assuredly meet with the simple answer, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see."

It is by no means intended to undervalue the importance of the external evidences of a divine revelation, whether derived from miracles, prophecy, or any other source, but simply to protest against the extreme doctrine of Mr. Norton's Discourse: that such evidence is the only proof of a divine revelation, and that all who cannot examine such evidence for themselves must take their religion upon trust. The refutation of this doctrine occupies much the larger portion of the Letter of the Alumnus of the Cambridge Theological School, the title of which is given in this article. The argument of the Alumnus, as far as it is a refutation, is perfectly successful. With his own doctrine we are as little satisfied as with that of Mr. Norton. "The truths of Christianity," he tells us, "have always been addressed to the intuitive perceptions of the common mind."\* He quotes, with much commendation, the following passage from Prof. Park, of Andover: "The argument from miracles is not the kind of proof to which the majority of cordial believers in the Bible are, at the present day, most attached. They have neither the time nor the ability to form an estimate of the historical evidence that favours or opposes the actual occurrence of miracles. They know the Bible to be true, because they feel it to be so. The excellence of its morality, like a magnet, attracts their souls; and sophistry, which they cannot refute, will not weaken their faith, resulting, as it does, from the accordance of their higher nature with the spirit of the Bible." This language, as coming from Professor Park, if it be anything more than a specimen of the affectation of expressing a familiar truth in a philosophical form, is something far worse. If this "higher nature" of man, which thus accords with the spirit of the Bible, is his renewed nature—his nature purified and enlightened by the Holy Spirit—then we have a solemn truth disguised and bedecked in order to gain favour with the world. But if this "higher nature" be the nature of man, in any of its aspects, as it exists before regeneration, then is the language of Professor Park a treasonable betrayal of the scriptural truth. The doctrines of depravity, and of the necessity of divine influence, are virtually denied. "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; unless a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God; the carnal mind is enmity against God; the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and the Greeks foolish-

\* Letters, &c., p. 116.

ness, but unto them which are called (and to them only) Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." To assert, therefore, the accordance of the higher nature of unrenewed men with the spirit of the Bible, is to contradict one of the primary doctrines of the word of God. It contradicts, moreover, universal experience. Does the character of God, as a being of inflexible justice and perfect holiness; do the doctrines of Christ crucified, of the corruption of man, of the necessity of regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost, and of eternal retribution, commend themselves to the hearts of unrenewed men? Are they not, on the contrary, rejected and blasphemed by those who delight to talk of the accordance of their higher nature with the spirit of the Bible?

If the passage on which we are commenting refers to nothing more than the accordance between the ethics of the Bible and the moral sense of men, and between its general representations of God and human reason, it is still more objectionable. It supposes that all that is peculiar to the Gospel, all that distinguishes it from a system of natural religion, may be left out of view, and yet its spirit, its essential part, remain. Is the spirit of a system which makes Christ a mere man, which denies the apostasy of our race, which rejects the doctrines of atonement and regeneration, the spirit of the Bible? Then, indeed, has offence of the cross ceased.

In every view, therefore, which we are able to take of this language of Professor Park, it excites the strongest feelings of disapprobation. If he believes what all evangelical Christians have ever believed on this subject, why use language to express that belief which those who deny the essential doctrines of the Gospel seize upon with avidity, as expressing their own views? On the other hand, if he does not agree with evangelical Christians on these points, why does he call himself by their name? Why does he march under their banner? We sincerely believe that the cause of Christ is in more danger from the treason of friends than from the open opposition of foes. While the Infidels of Germany, and the Unitarians of this country, are employing Christian language to convey anti-Christian doctrines, professing Christians are using the language of an infidel philosophy in treating of the mysteries of God. Whether this results from mere vanity, or from secret unbelief, the result is the same. The truth is buried or betrayed. Statements are made of Christian doctrine in a form which those who deny the doctrine readily adopt. Thus common ground is obtained, on which friends and foes of the Gospel can stand side by side, in seeming concord. The distinction between truth and error is done away, and Christians and infidels come to speak the same language. A more effective device than this, to destroy the power of the Gospel, cannot be conceived. The new philosophy promises to be a universal solvent, reducing all forms of opinion into vague formulas, into which every man may insinuate what sense he pleases.

While, therefore, we dissent from Mr. Norton's doctrine, that miracles are the only adequate proof of a divine revelation and that those who cannot examine that proof for themselves must believe upon the testimony of others, we dissent no less earnestly from the doctrine of his opponent, that Christianity is addressed to the intuitive perceptions of the common mind ; that it is embraced because of the accordance of its spirit with the higher nature of man. We believe the external evidence of the Bible to be perfectly conclusive ; we believe its internal evidence (that is, its majesty, its purity, its consistency, its manifold perfections) to be no less satisfactory ; but we believe also, that the ultimate foundation of the Christian's faith is the testimony of the Holy Spirit, by and with the truth in our hearts.

Though the author of the Letter to Mr. Norton devotes most of his attention to the refutation of the doctrine above stated, respecting miracles, the feature of the discourse which seems to have given him and his friends the greatest umbrage, is its denunciatory character ; that is, its venturing to assert, that those who deny the miracles of Christianity are infidels. This, it appears, was considered singularly out of taste and incongruous, seeing the Discourse was delivered before an association of liberal theologians. Its members, it is said, "agree in the rejection of many articles of faith which have usually been held sacred in the church ; a traditional theology has taken no strong hold of their minds ; they deem the simple truths of Christianity more important than the mysteries that have been combined with them ; but the principle of their union has never been made to consist in any speculative belief ; no test has been required as a condition of fellowship ; the mere suggestion of such a course would be met only with a smile of derision." The Association "is composed of the Alumni of a theological school, which has always claimed the favour of the community, on account of its freedom from an exclusive spirit ; its confidence in the safety and utility of thorough inquiry in all matters of faith ; its attachment to the principles of liberal theology ; and its renunciation of the desire to impose articles of belief on the minds of its pupils."\* That the exclusive principle should be adopted in a discourse before such an audience was not to be expected. By this principle is meant, "the assumption of the right for an individual, or for any body of individuals, to make their own private opinions the measure of what is fundamental in the Christian faith. As liberal Christians," it is said, "we have long protested against this principle, as contrary to the very essence of Protestantism. It was not because our exclusive brethren made a belief in the Trinity a test of allegiance to Christ, that we accused them of inconsistency with the liberty of the Gospel ; but because they presumed to erect any standard whatever, according to

\* Letter, &c., pp. 5 and 6.



which the faith of individuals should be made to conform to the judgment of others. It was not any special application of the principle that we objected to, but the principle itself; and, assuredly, the exercise of this principle does not change its character, by reason of the source from which it proceeds.”\*

This strikes us as very good declamation, but very poor reasoning. There may be just complaint about the application of the exclusive principle; but to complain of the principle is certainly very unreasonable. The author of this Letter is just as exclusive as Mr. Norton, and Mr. Norton as the Trinitarians. They draw the line of exclusion at different places; but all must draw it somewhere. An infidel is a man who denies the truth of the Christian religion. That religion is certainly something. Different men may have different views of what it consists of, or what is essential to it. But all must regard it as embracing some doctrines, or it would cease to be a religion; and, consequently, they must regard those who reject those doctrines as infidels, whether they say so or not. This Alumnus would hardly call Mohammedans Christians, though they reckon Abraham and Christ among the prophets, and believe in God and the immortality of the soul. Would he then call him a Christian who denies the divine mission of Christ, the being of an intelligent God, and the existence of the soul after death, merely because he lives in a Christian country, and assumes the Christian name? This would be to make liberality ridiculous. Yet such claimants of the Christian name are beginning to abound. Mr. Norton, therefore, is not to be blamed, even as “a liberal theologian,” for the adoption of the exclusive principle. He may have drawn the line in an inconvenient place; he may have violated the code of Unitarian etiquette, in making a belief in miracles essential to a belief in Christianity, and thus justly exposed himself to the charge of a breach of privilege; but he can hardly be blamed for making the belief of something necessary to entitle a man to the name of a Christian. We have no doubt his real offence was in drawing the line of exclusion in such a manner as to cast out of the pale of even liberal Christianity, some who were not disposed to be thus publicly disowned. This is, indeed, distinctly stated. “You declare,” says the author of the letter, to Mr. Norton, “that a certain kind of evidence, in your view, establishes the truth of Christianity, and that he who rests his faith on any other is an infidel, notwithstanding his earnest and open professions to the contrary. You thus, in fact, denied the name of Christian to not a few individuals in your audience, although you avoid discussing the grounds by which their opinions are supported. For it is perfectly well known, that many of our most eminent clergymen—I will not refrain from speaking of them as they deserve on account of my personal sympathy with their

\* Letter, &c., pp. 23 and 24.

views—repose their belief on a different foundation from that which you approve as the only tenable one.”\* It is plain, therefore, that the offensive exclusiveness of Mr. Norton’s Discourse consisted in denying the Christian name to those who deny the miracles of Christ.

It appears to us, however, that the writer of this letter does Mr. Norton great injustice. He accuses him of confounding “two propositions which are essentially distinct: a belief in a divine revelation, and a belief in the miracles alleged in its support. You utterly confound,” it is said, “the divine origin of Christianity, and a certain class the proofs of its divine origin.”—P. 34. Mr. Norton does not confound these two things; nor does he, as represented by this writer, pronounce all those to be infidels whose faith rests on any other foundation than miracles. He declares those to be infidels who deny the miracles of the New Testament, but this is a very different affair. Many who feel the force of other kinds of evidence much more than that of miracles, and whose faith, therefore, does not rest on that foundation, admit their truth. Mr. Norton’s doctrine is, that the miraculous accounts contained in the New Testament are so interwoven with all the other portions of the history, and enter so essentially into the nature of the whole system of Christianity, that they cannot be denied without denying what is essential to the Christian religion. There is no confusion here of the thing to be proved, and the proof itself. It is true, he teaches that miracles are the only proof of a divine revelation. But this is only one of his reasons for maintaining that the rejection of the miracles of Christianity is a rejection of Christianity itself. We believe this latter proposition, though we do not believe the former. We believe that miracles are essential to Christianity, though we do not believe that they are the only sufficient proof of its divine origin.

The Alumnus, moreover, censures Mr. Norton severely, for calling Spinoza an Atheist and Pantheist. The propriety of this censure depends on the sense given to the terms employed. An Atheist is one who denies the existence of God. But what is God? If the term be so extended as to include even a blind *vis formativa* operative through the universe, then there never was an Atheist. But if the term is used in its true scriptural sense; if it designates an intelligent and moral being, distinct from his creatures, whose essence is not their essence, whose acts are not their acts, and especially whose

\* Letter, &c., p. 25. On a previous page, however, complaint is made against Mr. Norton, for proposing to speak of prevailing opinions, and then opposing “the doctrine of the impossibility of miracles,” which, the writer says, “is not known to have an advocate among our theologians.” And on page 32, he says, though many excellent Christians doubt, “whether Jesus Christ performed the miracles ascribed to him in the New Testament,” he “cannot avoid the conclusion, that the miracles related in the Gospels, were actually wrought by Jesus.” The author, therefore, though he belongs to the class whose faith does not rest on miracles, neither denies their possibility nor their actual occurrence.

consciousness is not their consciousness, then Spinoza was an Atheist. He acknowledges no such being. The universe was God; or rather all creatures were but the phenomena of the only really existing being. It may, indeed, seem incongruous to call a man an Atheist, of whom it may with equal truth be said, that he believed in nothing but God. But in the sense stated above, which is a correct and acknowledged sense of the term, Spinoza was an Atheist.

"We come now," says the Alumnus, "to a still more extraordinary mistake, which arose probably from the habit, too prevalent among us, of grouping together theologians who have scarcely anything in common, but the language in which they write. You class Schleiermacher with the modern German school, whose disciples are called Rationalists or Naturalists."—P. 133. This, he says, is as whimsical a mistake as if a foreigner were to describe the celebrated Dr. Beecher as one of the most noted of the Unitarian school, in New England. This mistake is not quite as whimsical as the author supposes. The term Rationalist is, indeed, commonly employed to designate those who, making reason the source as well as the standard of religious truth, deny all divine revelation. Have the Pietists, says Röhr, the superintendent of Weimar, yet to learn that we admit no other revelation in Christ than such as occurred in Socrates or Plato? Of such Rationalists, who are in Germany just what the Deists were in England, Schleiermacher, and all the transcendental school, were the determined and contemptuous opponents. In another sense, however, the term Rationalist is applicable, and is in fact applied, to the Transcendentalists of the highest grade. Under the head of the *Mystisch-spekulativer Rationalismus*, Tholuck includes the gnosticism of the first centuries, the Pantheists of the middle ages, and of modern Germany.\* To this class of mystical Rationalists, Schleiermacher undoubtedly belonged. As, however, the term is generally applied to the deistical opposers of a supernatural revelation, with whom he was ever in controversy, it certainly produces confusion to call Schleiermacher himself a Rationalist. As to the question, whether he was a Pantheist, as it is a matter about which his learned contemporaries in his own country are at variance, we may stand in doubt. Few unbiassed readers of his "Reden über die Religion," however, could regard him in any other light, when those discourses were written. They are, to be sure, a rhapsody, full of genius and feeling, but still a rhapsody, in which the meaning is a very secondary concern, which the reader is not expected to understand, but simply to feel. Such a book may betray a man's sentiments, but is hardly fit to be cited in any doctrinal controversy. Schleiermacher was a very extraordinary man. Though he placed far too little stress on historical Christianity (i. e., on the religion of Christ, considered as objective revelation, recorded in the New Testa-

\* Tholuck's Glaubwürdigkeit der Evangel. Geschichte, &c., ch. 1.



ment), yet as he made Christ the centre of his mystical system, exalting him as the perfect manifestation of God, he exerted an extraordinary influence in breaking down the authority of those deistical Rationalists, who were accustomed to speak of Christ as altogether such an one as themselves. He was once a Moravian, and there is reason to believe that the interior life of his soul existed, after all, more under the form thus originally impressed upon it, than under the influence of his subsequent speculations. It was no uncommon thing for him to call upon his family to join with him in singing some devout Moravian hymn of praise to Christ; and though his preaching was of a philosophical cast, yet the hymns which he assigned were commonly expressive, in a high degree, of a devotional feeling and correct sentiment.\* Such a worshipper of Christ ought not to be confounded with such heartless Deists as Paulus, Wegscheider, and Röhr.

The Alumnus makes another objection to Mr. Norton's discourse, the justice of which we admit. It does not fulfil the expectations which the annunciation of his subject excites. It is not a discourse on the latest form of infidelity; it is a mere consideration of one subordinate feature of that form, viz., the denial of the miracles of the New Testament. And this feature is by no means characteristic of the system, as this denial was as formally made by Paulus as it is now by Strauss, men who have scarcely any other opinion in common. Mr. Norton's discourse gives us little insight into the form which infidelity has recently assumed in Germany, and still less into the nature of the opinions which have begun to prevail in his own neighbourhood. According to the Alumnus, it is better adapted to mislead than to inform the reader, as far as this latter point is concerned. "You announce," says he to Mr. Norton, "as the theme of your discourse, 'the characteristics of the times, and some of those opinions now prevalent, which are at war with a belief in Christianity.' This, certainly, was a judicious opening, and I only speak the sentiments of your whole audience, when I say that it was heard with universal pleasure. It at once brought up a subject of the highest importance, of no small difficulty, and of singular interest to our community at the present moment. It gave promise that you would discuss the character and tendency of opinions now prevalent in the midst of us; that you would meet some of the objections which have been advanced to popular theological ideas; that you would come directly to the great questions that are at issue between different portions of the audience which you addressed. But, instead of this mode of proceeding, you adopted one which could not have been expected from your statement of the subject, and which I conceive to have been singularly irrelevant to the demands of your audience, and the nature of the occasion. Instead of meeting, face to face, the opinions which

\* It was his habit to have these hymns printed on slips of paper and distributed to the people at the door of his church.

have found favour with many of the theologians in this country, which are publicly maintained from the pulpit and the press, in our own immediate community, which form the cardinal points on which speculation is divided among us, you appear studiously to avoid all mention of them; no one could infer from your remarks, that any novel ideas had been broached in our theological world, excepting such as can be traced back to the sceptical reasonings of Spinoza and Hume, and a comparatively small class of the modern theologians of Germany.\* He then denies that the writings of Spinoza, Hume, or of the German Rationalists (in the limited sense of that term), were exerting any influence among the theologians of Boston, and that the speculations which really prevailed, had a very different origin.

It is clear, from all this, that a serious and wide breach has occurred between different classes of the Unitarian divines in New England, but the real character of the novel ideas cannot be learned either from Mr. Norton's Discourse or from the letter of the Alumnus. It is, indeed, sufficiently plain, from the manner in which the latter speaks of pantheistic writers, that the new philosophy is the source of the difficulty. Speaking of the system of Spinoza, which he admits to be pantheistic, in a philosophical sense, inasmuch as it denies "real, substantial existence to finite objects," he says, "no one who understands the subject, will accuse this doctrine of an irreligious tendency. It is religious even to mysticism; on that account, as well as for certain philosophical objections it labours under (the Bible, it seems, has nothing to do with the question), I cannot adopt it as a theory of the universe; but I trust I shall never cease to venerate the holy and exalted spirit of its author, who, in the meek simplicity of his life, the transparent beauty of his character, and the pure devotion with which he wooed truth, even as a bride, stands almost 'alone, unapproached,' among men."—P. 126. Such language, in reference to a system which denies the existence of a personal God, the individuality of the human soul, which necessarily obliterates all distinction between right and wrong, betrays a singular perversion of ideas, and an entire renunciation of all scriptural views of the nature of religion. To call that obscure and mystic sentiment religion, which arises from the contemplation of the incomprehensible and infinite, is to change Christianity for Buddhism. The result, in fact, to which the philosophy of the nineteenth century has brought its votaries.

In another place, however, he says of the leading school in modern German theology, "that the impression of the powerful genius of Schleiermacher is everywhere visible in its character; but it includes no servile disciples; it combines men of free minds, who respect each other's efforts, whatever may be their individual conclusions; and the central point at which they meet is the ac-

\* Letter, &c., pp. 17, 18.

knowledge of the divine character of Christ, the divine origin of his religion, and its adaptation to the world, when presented in a form corresponding with its inherent spirit, and with the scientific culture of the present age. There are few persons who would venture to charge such a school with the promulgation of infidelity; there are many, I doubt not, who will welcome its principles, as soon as they are understood, as the vital, profound, and ennobling theology which they have earnestly sought for, but hitherto sought in vain."—P. 146.

It is difficult to know how this paragraph is to be understood. If restricted to a few of the personal friends and pupils of Schleiermacher, such as Lücke, Ullmann, Twesten, and a few others, the description has some semblance of truth. But, in this case, it is no longer the "leading school of modern German theology" that the writer is describing. And if extended to the really dominant school, the description is as foreign from the truth as can well be imagined.

We have so lately been concerned with the nature of the prevalent system of German theology and philosophy, that we may well be excused from enlarging on it here. As, however, it is a subject of constantly increasing interest, it may not be amiss to give a few additional proofs of the true character of the latest form of infidelity. In doing this, we shall avail ourselves of the authority of such men as Leo, Hengstenberg, and Tholuck, men of the highest rank in their own country for talents, learning, and integrity. We shall let them describe this new form of philosophy which is turning the heads of our American scholars, inflating some and dementing others; and we shall leave it to our transcendental countrymen, if they see cause, to accuse these German scholars and Christians of ignorance and misrepresentation.

It is well known to all who have paid the least attention to the subject, that the prevalent system of philosophy in Germany is that of Hegel; and that this system has, to a remarkable degree, diffused itself among all classes of educated men. It is not confined to recluse professors or speculative theologians, but finds its warmest advocates among statesmen and men of the world. It has its poets, its popular as well as its scientific journals. It is, in short, the form in which the German mind now exists and exhibits itself to surrounding nations, just as much as Deism or Atheism was characteristic of France during the reign of terror. That a system thus widely diffused should present different phases might be naturally anticipated. But it is still one system, called by one name, and despite of occasional recriminations among its advocates, recognised by themselves as one whole. The general characteristic of this school is pantheism. This, as we have quoted, is "the public secret of Germany;" and "we must," says Hengstenberg, "designedly close our own eyes on all that occurs around us, if we



would deny the truth of this assertion.”\* And on the following page, he says, that though there are a few of the followers of Hegel who endeavour to reconcile his principles with Christianity, yet these are spoken of with contempt by their associates, who, as a body, are “with the clearest consciousness, and as consequently as possible devoted to pantheism.” They are, moreover, he adds, hailed as brothers by the advocates of popular pantheism, who denounce, under the name of pietism, at once Christianity, Judaism and Deism. This was written four years ago, a long period in the history of modern philosophy, and since that time, the character of the school has developed itself with constantly increasing clearness.

In allusion to the French Chamber of Deputies, this school is divided into two parts, the right and the left. The former teaches the principles of the philosophy in an abstruse form, as a philosophy: the other gives them a more popular and intelligible form. This latter division, again, is divided into the centre left and extreme left; the one preserving some decorum and regard to public morals in their statements, and the other recklessly carrying out their principles to the extreme of licentiousness. To the extreme left belong the class which is designated the “Young Germany,” of which Heine is one of the most prominent leaders. This class profess themselves the true disciples of the extreme right; the extreme right acknowledge their fellowship with the centre left, and the centre left with the extreme left. The respectable portion of the party of course express themselves with disapprobation of the coarseness of some of their associates, but they speak of them only as the unworthy advocates of truth. Thus says Hengstenberg, “Prof. Vischer, one of the most gifted of the party, expresses himself with an energy against the ‘young Germans,’ which shows that his better feelings are not obliterated, and yet acknowledges their principles with a decision and plainness which prove how deep those principles enter into the very essence of the system, so that the better portion of the party cannot, with any consistency, reject them. In the *Halle Jahrbuch*, p. 1118, he speaks of the Rehabilitationists† as the ‘unworthy prophets of what, in its properly understood principle, is perfectly true and good.’ He says, ‘It is well, if in opposition to the morality of Kant and Schiller, the rights of our sensual nature should, from time to time, be boldly asserted.’ He complains, p. 507, of the pedantry of his country, where the want of chastity is placed on a level with drunkenness, gluttony or theft, and so expresses himself that every one sees that he considers incontinence a virtue under certain circumstances, and conjugal fidelity a sin.”‡ Though

\* *Kirchen-Zeitung*, January, 1836, p. 19.

† The name assumed by those who plead for the rehabilitation of the flesh, i. e., for the restoration of the sensual part of our nature to its rights, of which Christianity has so long deprived it.

‡ Preface to *Kirchen-Zeitung*, for 1839, p. 30.

this dominant party, therefore, has its divisions, its outwardly decent, and its openly indecent members, it is one school, and is liable to the general charges which have been brought against it as a whole.

It may well be supposed that a system so repugnant to every principle of true religion and sound morals could not be openly advocated, without exciting the most decided opposition. This opposition has come from various quarters; from professed philosophers and theologians, and from popular writers, who have attacked the system in a manner adapted to the common mind. Professor Leo, of Halle, has adopted this latter method of assault. He is one of the most distinguished historians of Germany; and, until within a few years, himself belonged to the general class of Rationalists. His history of the Jews was written in accordance with the infidel opinions which he then entertained. Having, however, become a Christian, he has publicly expressed his sorrow for having given to the history just mentioned the character which it now bears, and has, with great boldness and vigour, attacked the writings of the leading German school in theology. This step has excited a virulent controversy, and produced an excitement, particularly at Halle, such as has not been known for many years. Hengstenberg says, that Leo has not been sustained in this conflict by the friends of truth, as he had a right to expect. "One principal reason," he adds, "of this reserve, is no doubt, in many cases, the reckless vulgarity of many of his opponents. When they see what Leo has had to sustain, they tremble and exclaim, *Vestigia me terrent!* A decorous controversy with opponents who have something to lose, they do not dread, but they are unwilling to allow themselves to be covered with filth."\* Hengstenberg, however, is not the man to desert the truth or its advocates, let what will happen. He stands like a rock, despite the violent assault of open enemies and the coolness of timid friends, the firmest and the most efficient defender of Christianity in Germany.

Leo entitled his book against the latest form of infidelity, "*Hegelingen*;" that is, Hegelians of the left, in allusion to the division of the school into a right and left side. It is presumed he gave it this title because it was intended to be a popular work, designed to exhibit the principles of the school in a manner suited to the apprehensions of the ordinary class of educated people. It was, therefore, directed, not against that division of the school which wrapped up its doctrines in the impenetrable folds of philosophical language, but against that division which has spoken somewhat more intelligibly.

With regard to the charges which Leo brings against this school, Hengstenberg says, "No one at all familiar with the literature of the day, needs evidence of their truth. Instead of doubting, he may rather wonder that an abomination advocated for years past,

\* *Kirchen-Zeitung*, p. 21.

should now first, as though it were something new, be thus vehemently assaulted, and that the charges should be directed against comparatively few and unimportant writers." This latter circumstance, he adds, however, is accounted for, as Leo professed to confine himself to the productions of the year preceding the publication of his own book.

Leo's first charge is this: "This party denies the existence of a personal God. They understand by God, an unconscious power which pervades all persons, and which arrives at self-consciousness only in the personality of men. That is, this party teaches atheism without reserve." With regard to this charge, Hengstenberg remarks, "Whoever has read Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, and Vatke's *Biblical Theology*, where Pantheism, which every Christian must regard as only one form of Atheism, is clearly avowed, cannot ask whether the party in general holds these doctrines, but simply whether the particular persons mentioned by Leo belong, as to this point, to the party. About this who can doubt, when he hears Professor Michelet say, beside many other things of like import, 'God is the eternal movement of the universal principle, constantly manifesting itself in individual existences, and which has no true objective existence but in these individuals, which pass away again into the infinite.' [In other words, God is but the name given to the ceaseless flow of being.] When he hears him denouncing as unworthy of the name, 'the theistical Hegelians, who believe in a personal God in another world?'—P. 22. "Professor Vischer," adds Hengstenberg, "is so far from being ashamed of Pantheism, that he glories in his shame, and represents it as the greatest honour of his friend Strauss, that he has 'logically carried out the principle of the immanence of God in the world.' That the professors Gans and Benary agree with him and with Strauss, not only in general, but in this particular point, Michelet, 'certain of their assent,' has openly declared. According to Dr. Kühne, Hegel's God 'is not Jehovah,' he is 'the ever-streaming immanence of spirit in matter.' To this representation Dr. Meyen agrees, and says, 'I make no secret, that I belong to the extreme left of Hegel's school. I agree with Strauss perfectly, and consider him (seine Tendenz) as in perfect harmony with Hegel.' Another writer, the anonymous author of the book '*Leo vor Gericht*,' ridicules the charge of atheism as though it were a trifle. He represents the public as saying to the charge, 'What does it mean? Mr. Professor Leo is beyond our comprehension; Wodan, heathenism, Hegel's God, atheism! ha! ha! ha!'"

That Tholuck looks on the doctrine of Strauss, with whom these other writers profess agreement, and who is an avowed disciple of Hegel, in the same light, is clear from his language in his *Anzeiger*, for May, 1836; "Strauss," he says, "is a man who knows no other God than him who, in the human race, is constantly becoming man. He knows no Christ but the Jewish Rabbi who made his confession of sin to John the Baptist, and no heaven but that



which speculative philosophy reveals for our enjoyment on the little planet we now inhabit."

Nothing, however, can be plainer than Strauss's own language. "As man, considered as a mere finite spirit, and restricted to himself, has no reality; so God, considered as an infinite spirit, restricting himself to his infinity, has no reality. The infinite spirit has reality only so far as he unites himself to finite spirits (or manifests himself in them), and the finite spirit has reality only so far as he sinks himself in the infinite."\* How does this differ, except in the jargon of terms, from *le peuple-dieu*, of Anacharsis Clootz, the worthy forerunner of these modern atheists?†

"If," says another writer in Hengstenberg's Journal, "mankind is the incarnate Godhead, and beside this incarnate divine spirit there is no God, then we have a most perfect atheism, which removes us from Christianity far beyond the limits of Mohammedanism, the heathenism of the Indians and Chinese, or of our pagan ancestors." "Hegel and his school maintain that God is not an individual person, as opposed to other individuals, since individuality is of necessity exclusive, limited, and finite. Since God is a trinity, wherein the outwardness of number is merged in substantial unity, so God is a universal person; because the comprehension of individuals in unity is universality. This is what is meant by the expression, 'God is personality itself.' The simple question, whether they believe in the God whom Christians are bound to honour and love," continues this writer, "is here complicated with an obscure definition of the trinity, which no man can think removes the mystery of the subject by saying, *Die Ausserlichkeit der Zahl zu einer substantiellen Einheit umbogen ist* (the outwardness of number is merged in substantial unity). The charge of denying the true God remains in full force, this justification of themselves to the contrary notwithstanding." And on the following page, he adds, "that this school, to be honest, when asked, 'Do you deny God and Christianity?' ought to answer, 'Certainly, what you Christians of the old school call God and Christianity; we would teach you a better doctrine.'"‡

We have seen how that portion of this dominant school, who retain some respect for themselves and for the opinions of others, veil their God-denying doctrines in philosophical formulas unintelligible to the common people, and mysterious and mystical to themselves. Stripped of its verbiage, the doctrine is, that men are God; there is no other God than the ever-flowing race of man; or that the universal principle arrives at self-consciousness only in the human race, and therefore the highest state of God is man. The extreme left of the school trouble themselves but little with words

\* *Leben Jesu*, p. 730.

† "Je prêchai hautement," said Clootz, in the French Convention, "qu'il n'y a pas d'autre Dieu que la nature, d'autre souverain que le genre humain, le peuple-dieu."—Thiers's *Histoire de la Revolution Fran.*, vol. v., p. 197.

‡ *Kirchen-Zeitung*, February, 1839.

without meaning. They speak out boldly, so that all the world may understand. "We are free," says Heine, "and need no thundering tyrant. We are of age, and need no fatherly care. We are not the hand-work of any great mechanic. Theism is a religion for slaves, for children, for Genevese, for watch-makers."

2. "Leo," says Hengstenberg, "charges this party with denying the incarnation of God in Christ, and with turning the Gospel into a mythology. If the previous charge is substantiated, this requires no special proof. If the existence of God, in the Christian sense of the terms, be denied, we must cease to speak of an incarnation in the Christian sense of the word. The doctrine of the immanence of God in the world, says Professor Vischer (*Halle Jahrbuch*, s. 1102), forbids us to honour 'God in the letter, or in single events, or individuals.' It regards, 'as a breach in the concatenation of the universe, that an individual should be the Absolute.' According to this view, there is no other incarnation than that which Professor Michelet, in harmony with the Chinese philosophers, teaches, that 'God must constantly appear here on earth in a form which affects our senses (*als sinnlicher*), though constantly changing that form (*als ein sich aufhebender und aufgehobener*), and in this statement, if I mistake not, the whole school will recognise the eternal incarnation of God.' The Absolute attains consciousness in a series of individuals, no one of which fully represents him, but each has significance only as a member of the whole. This incarnation of God is eternal, but all individuals are perishing and transitory; the Absolute constantly fashions for itself new individuals, and rejects the former as soon as they have answered their end. These form the 'Golgotha of the Absolute Spirit;' they surround, like bloodless ghosts, the throne of the monster that devours his own children; that, void of love, strides through ages, trampling and destroying all that lies in his way." Such is the awful language in which Hengstenberg describes the God of the Hegelians.

The incarnation of God, then, according to this school, did not occur in Christ, but is constantly occurring in the endless succession of the human race. Mankind is the Christ of the new system, and all the Gospel teaches of the Son of God is true only as it is understood of mankind. Strauss teaches this doctrine with a clearness very unusual in a philosopher. "The key," says he, "of the whole doctrine of Christ, is that the predicates which the church has affirmed of Christ, as an individual, belong to an Idea, to a real, not to a Kantian unreal idea. In an individual, in one God-man, the attributes and functions which the church attributes to Christ, are incompatible and contradictory; in the idea of the race they all unite. Mankind is the union of the two natures, the incarnate God, the infinite revealed in the finite, and the finite conscious of its infinity. The race is the child of the visible mother and of the invisible Father, of the Spirit and of nature; it is the true worker of miracles, in so far as in course of its history, it

constantly attains more complete mastery over nature, which sinks into the powerless material of human activity. It is sinless, so far as the course of its development is blameless; impurity cleaves only to the individual, but in the race, and its history, it is removed. The race dies, rises again, and ascends to heaven, in so far as by the negation of its natural element (*Natürlichkeit*) a higher spiritual life is produced, and as by the negation of its finitude as a personal, national, worldly spirit, its unity with the infinite spirit of heaven is manifested. By faith in this Christ is man justified before God; that is, by the awakening the idea of the nature of man in him, especially as the negation of the natural element, which is itself a negation of the spirit, and thus a negation of a negation is the only way to true spiritual life for man, the individual becomes a partaker of the theanthropical life of the race. This alone is the real import of the doctrine of Christ; that it appears connected with the person and history of an individual, has only the subjective ground, that his personality and fate were the occasion of awakening this general truth in the consciousness of men, and that at that period the culture of the world, and indeed the culture of the mass at all periods, allowed of their contemplating the Idea of the race, only in the concrete form of an individual.\*

Tholuck, whose charity for philosophical aberrations is very wide, remarks on this passage: "As the incarnation of God occurred not in an individual, but comes to pass only in the constant progress of the race, so the individual, as a mere item of the race, has fulfilled his destiny at the close of his earthly course, and the race alone is immortal. It is not we that enter a future world, the future world goes forward in this, the more the spirit becomes aware of its infinitude, and by the power of reason gains the mastery over nature. This ideal perfection is to be attained, not in heaven, but in the perfection of our political and social relations. This system, therefore, comes to the same result with the materialism of the Encyclopedists, who mourned over mankind for having sacrificed the real pleasures of time for the visionary pleasures of eternity, and the protracted enjoyments of life, for the momentary happiness of a peaceful death. It agrees, moreover, despite of its intellectual pretensions, with the wishes of the materialistical spirit of the age, which sets as the highest end of man, not the blessings promised by the church, but according to the "Young Germans," the refined pleasures of life, and according to politicians, the perfection of the state."

It is strange that men holding such views should trouble themselves at all with the Gospel. As this system, however, has arisen in a Christian country, there was but one of two things to do, either to say that real Christianity means just what this system teaches, or to explode the whole evangelical history. Some have

\* Strauss's *Leben Jesu*, th. ii., s. 734, quoted by Tholuck, in his *Glaubwürdigkeit*, &c., p. 19.



taken one course, and some the other, while some unite both. That is, they reject the Gospel history as a history ; they represent it as a mere mythology ; but as the ancient philosophers made the mythology of the Greeks and Romans a series of allegories, containing important truths, so do these modern philosophers represent the Gospels as a mere collection of fables, destitute in almost every case of any foundation in fact, but still expressive of the hidden mysteries of their system. It is by a mytho-symbolical interpretation of this history that the truth must be sought. The life of Jesus by Strauss is a laborious compilation of all the critical objections against the New Testament history, which he first thus endeavoured to overturn, and then to account for and explain as a Christian mythology. "Had this book," says Hengstenberg, "been published in England, it would have been forgotten in a couple of months."\* In Germany it has produced a sensation almost without a parallel. It has become the rallying ground of all the enemies of Christianity, open and secret, and the number of its advocates and secret abettors is, therefore, exceedingly great. "The author," says Tholuck, "has uttered the sentence which so few dared to utter ; 'The evangelical history is a fable.' He has uttered it at a time when the deniers of the truth were filled with spleen at the prospect of a constantly increasing faith in the Gospel. With what joy then must this hypocritical and timid generation hail a leader who gives himself to the sweat and dust of the battle, while they hide behind the bushes, and rub their hands, and smile in each other's faces!"†

3. Leo's third charge against this party is, that they deny the immortality of the soul. "This point also needs no further proof," says Hengstenberg, "since the former have been proved. With the personality of God falls of course that of man, which is the necessary condition of an existence hereafter. To a pantheist, 'the subject which would assert its individual personality, is evil itself' (Michelet). It is regarded as godless even to cherish the desire of immortality. According to the doctrine of the eternal incarnation of God, it must appear an intolerable assumption for an individual to lay claim to that which belongs only to the race ; he must freely and gladly cast himself beneath the wheels of the idol car that he may make room for other incarnations of the Spirit better adapted to the advancing age. The proofs, however, of this particular charge are peculiarly abundant. Hegel himself, who ought not to be represented as so different from the Hegelings, since the difference between them is merely formal and not essential, involved himself in the logical denial of the immortality of the soul. This has been fully proved with regard to him and Dr. Marheineke, in a previous article in this journal (that is, the *Kirchen-Zeitung*). It has also been demonstrated by Weise in

\* *Kirchen-Zeitung*, Jan. 1, 1836, p. 35.

† *Glaubwürdigkeit*, p. 34.

the work, "Die philosophische Geheimlehre von der Unsterblichkeit," as far as Hegel is concerned; and with Weise, Becker has more recently signified his agreement. If this happens in the green tree, what will become of the dry?

"Richter came out with such a violent polemic against the doctrine of immortality, that the party had to disavow him, for fear of the public indignation. When, however, they thought it could be done unnoticed or without danger, they acknowledged the same doctrine. Michelet endeavours most earnestly to free Hegel's system from the charge of countenancing the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as from a reproach. He speaks out clear and plain his own views in words which, according to him, Hegel himself had spoken, 'Thought alone is eternal, and not the body and what is connected with its individuality,' that is, the whole personality which, according to this system, depends entirely on the body (Leiblichkeit). . . . Ruge (Hall. Jahrb., s. 1011) ridicules the scruples of theologians as to whether 'Philosophy can make out the immortality of the human soul; whether it can justify the gross doctrines of hell, of wailing and gnashing the teeth,' &c. 'Such vulgar craving,' he says, 'is beginning to mix itself with purely philosophical and spiritual concerns, and threatens to merge philosophy in its troubled element. The more this dogmatical confusion arrogates to itself; the more this senseless justification of the wretched errors of orthodoxy dishonours the free science of philosophy, the more necessary will it be to cast out this dung-heap of nonsense to the common mind (in das gemeine Bewusstseyn). Meyen at first puts on the air of one who would acknowledge the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. 'The Hegelians,' he says, 'do indeed reject the sensual conceptions of immortality, but they admit the doctrine as presented by Marheineke in his Theology.' The dishonest ambiguity of this sentence will not escape notice. Dr. Marheineke denies the continued personal existence of the soul after death, and attributes the belief of such a doctrine to selfishness. 'Whoever,' continues Meyen, 'is so conversant as Hegel with what is eternal in connexion with spirit, must admit the eternity of the spirit.' Here again is intentional ambiguity. The question concerning the continued personal existence of the soul is silently changed for the question about the eternity of spirit. A veil is thrown over the fact that Hegel, while he admitted the latter, denied the former, as Michelet and others have sufficiently shown. These preliminary remarks, transparent as they are, were only intended to prevent his being quoted in proof of the disbelief of immortality in the school to which he belongs. He immediately comes out plainly with his own views and those of his party, yet so as still to leave a door open behind him. 'What though a Hegelian,' says he, 'did not believe in the immortality of the soul in a Christian sense—let it be noticed that the words are here so placed, that the uninformed should infer that the school, as a whole, and its above mentioned leaders, do believe in immor-

tality in a Christian sense—what then? If I resign myself to this, am I thereby a different person, or is the world for me different? I would seek to acknowledge God in his works before, and I would live as morally as ever.’ At last, however, it becomes too hot for him, even in these thin clothes, and he casts them off, having assumed them only for the sake of his brothers in Hegel, who happen to be in office. ‘Grass,’ says he, ‘is already growing on the grave of Daub, is he, therefore, dead for his friends and for the world? his works, and hence also his spirit, live. Many winter storms have already swept over the graves of Hegel and of Goethe, but does not their spirit still live among us? It is, as Christ said, where two of you are met together, there am I in the midst of you.\* Thus each continues to live according to his works. The citizen in the remembrance of his family; he who has distinguished himself in the kingdom of the spirit, still lives in that kingdom, and hence, he who has worked for eternity is immortal.’”

4. “Leo finally,” says Hengstenberg, “accuses this school of wishing to pass themselves for Christians, by means of disguising their ungodly and abominable doctrines under a repulsive and unintelligible phraseology. This is a heavy charge. Honesty and candour have ever been the ornament of our national character. They have ever been regarded as the innate virtues of a German. Whoever undermines them is a disgrace to his country. Yet who can say the charge is not well founded? Several proofs of its truth have been given in what has already been said. A statement, however, by Professor Vischer, in his character of Dr. Strauss (Hall. Jahrb., s. 111), is worthy of special attention. ‘How firm his (Strauss’s) conviction as to the main point even

\*To this passage Hengstenberg has the following note: “We frequently meet, in the writings of this school, with similar shameful profanations of the scriptures, which are seldom quoted without some mutilation, which is characteristic of the relation of the party to the word of God. These writers delight to transfer to Hegel what the scriptures say of Christ. According to Bayrholder (Halle Jahrb., s. 343), Hegel ‘is the absolute centre around which the present revolves.’ His first disciples are compared with the apostles. ‘Hinrich is the rock of terminology, the strength and the support of the school’ (Jahrb., s. 672). Leo, who has left the party, is compared with Judas, and even designated as ‘the fallen angel of speculation’ (Hegel’s doctrine concerning the State). The school, as a whole, is a copy of the church of Christ. According to Bayrholder (Hegelings, s. 29), it should no longer be called a school, but ‘the congregation of the idea,’ or ‘the spiritual kingdom of the idea.’ Ruge applies the passage, ‘The kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent take it by force,’ to the popular exhibition of Hegel’s philosophy by Erdmann. The most shameful of these perversions, however, relate to the passages concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost. Whoever comes out boldly against the spirit of Hegel, or of his disciples, or of the time, or of hell, is declared guilty of the sin against the Holy Spirit, or rather the Spirit (for the word *holy* they commonly leave out, it savours too much of morality; when it is inserted, it is only for the sake of the allusion). ‘The writings,’ says Meyen, ‘in which Leo has presented his new opinions, blaspheme the Spirit—and hence God himself.’ To which we answer: Yes, your spirit and your God we wish to blaspheme, for blasphemy of him is the praise of the God of heaven and of his Spirit. . . .” We can hardly express the admiration which we feel for Hengstenberg. No one who does not know how much alone and aloft he stands, and how much he has had to endure for his uncompromising opposition to the enemies of God and religion, can appreciate the noble firmness and vigour of his character.”



then was, is shown in a highly interesting correspondence between him and one of his friends, communicated to me through the kindness of the latter, and which now lies before me. It is touching to observe with what cheerful confidence in the saving power of the truth he endeavours to remove the anxiety and scruples of his friend, who felt pained by the chasm which his scientific convictions had made between him and his congregation; how clearly he shows that it is no dishonesty to speak the language of the imagination (*der Vorstellung*), to introduce unobserved into the figures which alone float before the believer, the thoughts of the knower (*des Wissenden*).’ Here the zeal and skill with which Dr. Strauss teaches his friend how to lie, and instructs him how to steal from the congregation what they regard as the most precious treasure (and what, for that very reason, it will be found impossible to rob them of), are represented as a great merit, and the reader is exhorted to allow himself to be affected by this proof of his amiableness, and in the warmth of his sympathy to press his hand, and exclaim, O how good you are! We, however, cannot regard such conduct without the deepest moral abhorrence. The school endeavour to justify this course, from the relation which Hegel has established between conception and thought (*Vorstellung\* und Begriff*). But this justification is completely worthless. It is not one whit better than the theories by which the robbers in Spain justify their vocation. Evil is no better, but on the contrary worse, and the more to be condemned when it is brought *in formam artis*. The relation assumed by Hegel, between conception and thought, would allow at most of a formal accommodation. That yours is of that nature, you cannot assert. . . . . If the difference between your thought (*Begriff*) and our conception (*Vorstellung*) is merely formal, why do you rave with such hatred against us? Why do you say that ‘Pietism is a disease which corrupts the very life of the spirit?’ (*Vischer*, p. 526.) How can the question be about a mere formal difference? Our Conception and your Thought are just as far apart as heaven and hell. We confess God the Father the maker of heaven and earth, and Jesus Christ his only begotten Son; you deny both the Father and the Son, and confess Antichrist, yea, would yourselves be his members. . . . .”

Hengstenberg afterwards remarks, that it is almost incredible to what an extent this deception and hypocrisy is carried. This

\* This translation of the words *Vorstellung* and *Begriff* is no doubt inadequate. The technical terms of a system do not admit of adequate translation, because the sense assigned to them in the system is arbitrary. The only method that can be pursued in such cases, is to give their nearest corresponding words the same arbitrary signification. Hegel calls that form of truth which is the object of absolute knowledge, a pure thought, *Begriff*; and that form in which it is the object of faith or feeling, *Vorstellung*. Or, the exercises of feeling, desire, will, &c., considered as objects of attention, are *Vorstellungen*; these it is the office of philosophy, by the process of thinking, to turn into thoughts, *Begriffe*. And hence, he says, *Vorstellungen* can be regarded as the metaphors of *Begriffe*. See his *Encyklopädie*, p. 5.

course of conduct, however, though very characteristic of this modern school, is an old device. The Rationalists, to go no further back, were accustomed to speak of the Lamb of God, of the blood of Christ, &c., with the avowed purpose that the people should attach to these expressions their scriptural sense, while they employed them in a very different one. How strange, too, it sounds to hear this Alumnus of Cambridge speaking of "the divine character of Christ," of "the cross of Christ as the hope of the world," and "of the anointing of the Holy Ghost!" This community, we trust, is not prepared to have such solemn words made playthings of. Let philosophers and errorists, who deny the truths of the Bible, find words for themselves, and not profane the words of God by making them a vehicle for the denial of his truth. One of the most monstrous examples of this perversion of scriptural language occurs in a passage quoted above from Strauss. He, too, will have it that man is justified by faith in Christ, because as God is incarnate in the race, the race is Christ, and by faith in the race, or by coming to a proper apprehension of his own nature, man reaches his highest state of perfection. Mr. Bancroft, in his history, talks of men being justified by faith, meaning thereby that they are justified by their principles. And the Oxford divines teach that we are justified by faith, since the Thirty-nine Articles say so, but then it is by the faith of the church.\*

"With this last charge, Leo," says Hengstenberg, "entered upon the department of morals; and we could wish that he had dwelt longer on this part of the subject. It would then have been shown, how this party are labouring to destroy all that Rationalism has left of religion and morality. What their ethics are, may be readily inferred from their religion. Where there is no personal God, there is no law which men need fear to violate, as the expression of his will. If the distinction between God and man is removed, if man is set in the place of God, then nothing is more natural than that men should, without reserve, and upon principle, give themselves up to all their inclinations and lusts. To suppress these desires, is to hinder the development of God; if they do not become God as developed, they do become the nascent God; if not good in themselves, they are relatively good as transition-points

\* It should be here stated that Dr. Strauss, at the close of his "Life of Jesus," as first printed, had freely admitted the incompatibility of his views with the exercise of the ministry in the Christian church. This admission, in the last edition, he has suppressed; and in his letter to the authorities of Zurich, when appointed a professor of theology in the university of that city, he says, he should not consider it a difficult matter to quiet the apprehensions of those who feared that he would labour to overthrow the Christian religion, that he would endeavour to sustain "the fundamental truths of Christianity," and only try to free it "from human additions." When it is considered that he regards as human additions almost everything that the people of Zurich hold to be fundamental truths, there can be but one opinion of the dishonesty of this statement. The reputation for candour, which he had gained by his first admission, has been lost entirely by these subsequent proceedings. Our readers are aware that the attempt to force Strauss on the people as a professor, led to one of the most remarkable revolutions of our times. The people rose en masse and overthrew the government.

in the progress of development. It is not sin that is sinful, but only impenitence, that is, cleaving to the relative good, which is vulgarly called evil, as though it were the absolute good. These painful results of the doctrine of this school are everywhere, with the most logical consequence, avowed and brought to light. Ruge, in a passage already quoted, attributes the question, whether philosophy has any ethics, to 'vulgar craving' (*gemeinen Bedürftigkeit*), as much as the question, whether it can vindicate the gross doctrine of hell, &c.; and insists that this whole 'dung-heap should be cast out into the mire of the common mind.' In connection with Leo, and the editor (Hengstenberg himself), Menzel is designated as 'the incarnation of Protestant Jesuitism' (Meyen, p. 5), because he has appeared in defence of morality, now completely antiquated, against the Young Germany. On every side, efforts are made to represent him, before the whole nation, as a marked man, on account of his conflict with that which the spirit of the pit in our day says to the common man. 'Upon Wolfgang Menzel,' says Meyen, 'judgment is already executed; he lies like a scurvy old dog on the foul straw which Herr von Cotta has in compassion left him, and can seldom muster courage to yelp, that all is over with his pitiful morality, which has gone to its rest.\*' The principles of the 'Young Germany' have been advanced in the Literary Magazine of Berlin with shameless effrontery, and the infamous advocates of those principles defended, and the sottish prudery of 'the grey heads of the age,' who were disgusted at their song: 'We lead a merry life,' has been turned into ridicule." Hengstenberg then introduces the passage from Professor Vischer, quoted on a previous page, in which, while he condemns these young Germans as unworthy prophets, he defends their principles.

This Pantheistic school, therefore, is as subversive of all morality as it is of all religion. It does not admit the idea of sin. As there is no God there is no law, and no transgression. Everything actual is necessary. The progress of the race, the ever nascent God, goes on by eternal undeviating laws, and all that occurs, in fact, is the action of the only God of which this system knows.† We do not think it right to stain our pages with the indecent ravings of those writers who, availing themselves of the principles of the decent portion of the school, have applied them to the service of sin. It is enough to show the nature of the system, that the Pantheist "does not believe in the continued existence of the individual, in the reality of his freedom, in the deadly nature of sin, and its opposition to God. Individuals are to him but the phantas-

\* Wolfgang Menzel was the editor of a periodical, called the *Morgen-Blatt*, belonging to von Cotta, one of the principal booksellers of Germany. In that Journal, Menzel attacked, with great manliness and effect, the libertine principles of Heine, Gutzkow, and other writers of the extreme left of the Pantheistic school.

† *Die Geschichte ist der werdende Gott, und dies Werden Gottes geschicht nach ewigen Gesetzen; nirgends ein Sprung, überall nur Entwicklung.* Hengstenberg, in *Kirchen-Zeitung*, January, 1836.



magoria of the spirit. Liberty is but the subtle moment of determination. Sin is what a man, with his measure of knowledge and power, cannot avoid : remorse is, therefore, a forbidden emotion in his system.”\*

The most offensive aspect of this whole system is, that in deifying men, it deifies the worst passions of our nature. “This,” says a writer in Hengstenberg’s *Journal*, “is the true, positive blasphemy of God,—this veiled blasphemy—this diabolism of the deceitful angel of light—this speaking of reckless words, with which the man of sin sets himself in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. The Atheist cannot blaspheme with such power as this; his blasphemy is negative; he simply says there is no God. It is only out of pantheism that a blasphemy can proceed, so wild, of such inspired mockery, so devoutly godless, so desperate in its love of the world; a blasphemy at once so seductive, and so offensive, that it may well call for the destruction of the world.”†

As an illustration, at once, of the confidence and character of these modern pantheists, we shall give one more passage from Strauss, the most prominent, and, perhaps, most respected writer of the school: “This disposition is not a secret of the philosophers only; as an obscure instinct, it has become the universal spirit of the age. It is acknowledged, that we no longer know how to build churches. But on the other hand, from an impulse, which, as a miasma, has spread, especially over all Germany, monuments to great men and lofty spirits arise on every side. There is much that is ridiculous mixed with this feeling; but it has its serious aspect, and is assuredly a sign of the times. The *Evangelical Church Journal* (Hengstenberg’s) has taken the right view of the matter, when it pronounces accursed, as a new idolatry, the honour paid to the man on the pillar in the *Place Vendôme*, and to him of the *Weimar Olympus*. In fact, they are Gods, before whom the God of the *Church Journal* may well tremble; or, in other words, a heathenism which endangers its Christianity. If Heine has compared the accounts of O’Meara, Antommarchi, and Las Cases, with Matthew, Mark, and Luke, will not some one soon discover in Bettina’s *Letters*.‡ a new Gospel of John? A new Paganism, or it may be, a new Catholicism, has come over Protestant Germany. Men are no longer satisfied with one incarnation of God: they desire, after the manner of the Indians, a series of repeated avatars. They wish to surround the solitary Jesus with a new circle of saints, only these must not be taken from the church alone; but, as in the private chapel of the Emperor Alexander Severus, the statue of Orpheus stood beside those of Christ and of Abraham, so the tendency of the age is to honour the revelation of God in all the spirits which have wrought, with life and

\* *Kirchen-Zeitung*, 1836, p. 571.

† *Ibid*.

‡ An enthusiastic girl, who wrote a series of *Letters to Goethe*, filled with a sort of raving Platonic love.

creative power, on mankind. The only worship—we may deplore it, or we may praise it, deny it we cannot—the only worship which remains for the cultivated classes of this age, from the religious declension of the last, is the worship of genius.”\*

Such, then, is the latest form of infidelity. It knows no intelligent or conscious God but man; it admits no incarnation, but the eternal incarnation of the universal spirit in the human race; the personality of men ceases with their present existence, they are but momentary manifestations of the infinite and unending, there is neither sin nor holiness; neither heaven nor hell. Such are the results to which the proud philosophy of the nineteenth century has brought its followers. We have not drawn this picture. We have purposely presented it as drawn by men, with regard to whose opportunities and competency there can be no room for cavil. It might be supposed, that a system so shocking as this, which destroys all religion and all morality, could be adopted by none but the insane or the abandoned; that it might be left as St. Simonianism, Owenism, or Mormonism, to die of its own viciousness. This supposition, however, overlooks the real nature of the system. We have presented it in its offensive nakedness. It is not thus that it addresses itself to the uninitiated or timid. What is more offensive than Romanism, when stripped of its disguises, yet what more seductive in its bearing, for the vast majority of men? There is everything to facilitate the progress of this new philosophy. It has a side for all classes of men. For the contemplative and the sentimentally devout, it has its mysticism, its vagueness, its vastness. It allows them to call wonder, a sense of the sublime or of the beautiful, religion. For the poet, too, it has its enchantments, as it gives consciousness and life to everything, and makes all things expressive of one infinite, endless mind. For the proud, no Circe ever mingled half so intoxicating a cup. Ye shall be as God, said the archtempter of our race: ye are God, is what he now whispers into willing ears. For the vain and frivolous, it has charms scarcely to be resisted. It gives them easy greatness. They have only to talk of the I, and the not I (or, as they prefer to have it, the me and the not me), and they are beyond the depth of all ordinary men. And even then, they are, according to the system, far greater than they can possibly think themselves to be. For the sensual, it is a perfect heaven. It legitimates and dignifies all enjoyments. It makes self-indulgence religion. It forbids all remorse and all fear. That a system so manifold as this, which

\* *Vergängliches und Bleibendes in Christenthum. Selbst-gespräche Von Dr. Strauss.* In der Zeitschrift: *Der Freihafen, Gallerie von Unterhaltungsbildern aus den Kreisen der Literatur, Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft.* Mit Beiträgen von Carus, Gans, König, Mises, Barnhagen von Ense, dem Fürsten von Pückler, Rosenkranz, Strauss, Theodor Mundt, Kühne, u. A. Drittes Heft. The names of the contributors to this Journal, may give some idea of its character. Here we have Gans, Rosenkranz, Strauss, prominent Hegelian philosophers or theologians, and the libertine prince of Pückler.

has a chamber of imagery for every imagination, should find advocates and friends on every hand, is not a matter of surprise. There is still another circumstance which must be taken into consideration in accounting for the rapid progress of this new philosophy, and in speculating on its prospects. It has, in some of its principles, a certain resemblance to the truth. The God of the Bible is not the God of the Deist, of the rationalist, or of the worldling, a God afar off, who has no oversight or direction of his creatures. The world is not a machine wound up and left to itself. The wonders of vegetable and animal life are not the result of the properties of matter acting blindly and without guidance. The God of the Bible is an everywhere present, and ever active God, in whom we live and move and have our being ; it is his Spirit that causes the grass to grow ; it is he that fashions the curious mechanism of our bodies, who numbers the hairs of our heads, and directs all our goings. All the changes in nature are produced by his power, so that everything we see is in truth a manifestation of God. But then the Bible does not merge God in the world, or the world in God. Though everywhere present in the world, God is not the world ; but a Being of infinite intelligence, power, excellence and blessedness, guiding and controlling his creatures, whose acts and consciousness are their own and not his. The chasm which divides the pantheistic from the scriptural view of God is bottomless, and the difference in the effects of the two views is infinite ; it is all the difference between infinite good and infinite evil. If there is anything impressed clearly on the Bible, it is the personality of God ; it is the ease and confidence with which his people can say *Thou*, in calling on his name ; it is that he ever says *I* of himself, and *you*, when addressing his creatures.

It is doubtless in a good degree owing to the deceptive show of truth in this new system—to its pretending to bring back, if we may reverently so speak, God to the world from which Deists and Rationalists had so long banished him, that we are to attribute the hold which it has taken of many of the better sort of minds ; and it is to this that it owes its most alarming aspect ; since those errors are always the most dangerous which can put on the nearest resemblance to truth. A conflict, therefore, is anticipated by the Christians of Germany with this new form of infidelity, far more lasting and deadly than any that has yet afflicted the church in that country. If rationalism, so unattractive, so lifeless, made such inroads upon the church, “*What*,” say they, “may be expected from Pantheism, a system so full of life, of feeling, of mysticism, of poetry, whose disciples can, with a deceptive show, boast that they are religious, that they are introducing a new, beautiful and universal religion, and give themselves out as a new sort of Christians ;” nay, who pretend at times to be real Christians, who say they believe in the Trinity, in the incarnation, redemption, resurrection, and all other doctrines of the Bible, that is, they express some philosophical enigma under these terms ; or at times speak



of Christianity with affected respect, as good for the people in their present state, professing with Cousin that "philosophy is patient . . . . . happy in seeing the great bulk of mankind in the arms of Christianity, she offers, with modest kindness, to assist her in ascending to a yet loftier elevation."\*

Strange, therefore, as it may seem, when we look at this system in its true character, it undoubtedly has already prevailed to a great extent in Germany; and is making some progress in France, England, and our own country. Its true nature is disguised in obscure philosophical language, which many use without understanding, until it comes at last to the expression of their real opinions. We have evidence enough that this Pantheistic philosophy has set its cloven foot in America. First we had a set of young men captivated by the genius and mysticism of Coleridge, republishing works through which were scattered intimations more or less plain of the denial of a personal God. This was the first step. In the writings of Coleridge the general tone and impression was theistic. He was an Englishman; he had received too many of his modes of thinking and of expressions from the Bible, to allow of his being a Pantheist, except when musing. Next we had the writings of Cousin, a man of different cast, with none of Coleridge's solemnity or reverence. A Frenchman, on whose mind the Bible had left no strong impress. Vain and presumptuous, and yet timid; intimating more than he durst utter. As he has given the world nothing in the form of a system, it is only by these occasional intimations that his readers can judge how far he adopts the ideas of the German school, whence all his opinions are borrowed. These intimations, however, are sufficiently frequent and sufficiently clear to make it plain that he is a denier of God and of the Gospel. He uses almost the very language of the Hegelians in expressing his views of the nature of God. "God exists as an idea," says the Hegelian;† "these ideas," i. e., of the infinite, finite, and the relation between them, "are God himself," says Cousin.‡ According to the Hegelians, God arrives to consciousness in man; and so Cousin teaches, "God returns to himself in the consciousness of man." The German school teaches that everything that exists is God in a certain stage of development; so also Cousin, "God is space and number, essence and life, indivisibility and totality, principle, end, and centre, at the summit of being and at its lowest degree, infinite and finite together, triple in a word, that is to say, at the same time God, nature, and humanity. In fact, if God is not everything he is nothing."§ Surely there can be but one opinion among Christians, about a system which admits of no God but the universe, which allows no intelligence or consciousness to the infinite Spirit, but that to which he attains in the human soul, which

\* Cousin's *Introd. to Hist. of Phil.*, p. 57. † Marheineke's *Dogmatik*, § 174.

‡ *Elements of Psychology*, p. 400.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

makes man the highest state of God. And we should think there could be among the sane but one opinion of the men who, dressed in gowns and bands, and ministering at God's altars, are endeavouring to introduce these blasphemous doctrines into our schools, colleges and churches. "Ancient chronicles relate," says Leo, "that there were watchtowers and castles for which no firm foundation could be obtained, until (by the direction of the practitioners of the black art) a child was built up in the walls. They made a little chamber in the foundation, placed within it a table with sugar and playthings, and while the poor, unconscious little victim was rejoicing over its toys, the grim masons built up the wall." This is a fable ; or, if true, belongs to a pagan age, and every nerve within us trembles, when we think of this abomination of heathenism. But are not those who cut the people loose from the more than thousand years' old foundation of their morality and faith, by teaching the rising generation that there is no personal God ; that the history of his only begotten Son is a cunningly devised fable, which does indeed, if properly understood, give a good philosophical sense ; that all subjective consciousness and feeling end with death ; that the greatest abominations that ever occurred were necessary, and thus reasonable, and a conscious and wilful opposition to God is alone evil ; are not these men the most cruel of masons, who immure the children of Germany in the walls of the tower of heathen ideas, in the bastions and watchtowers of the devil, enticing them within with the sugar toys of their vain philosophy, that they may perish in the horrors of unsatisfied hunger and thirst after the word of the Lord ?"\*

Shocking as this whole system is, we doubt not it will, to a certain extent, prevail even among us ; and God may bring good out of the evil. "There are two people," says Hengstenberg, "in the womb of this age, and only two. They will become constantly more firmly and decidedly opposed, the one to the other. Unbelief will more and more exclude what it still has of faith ; and faith, what it has of unbelief. Unspeakable good will hence arise. 'And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped, will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand ; and let all the other people go, every man unto his own place.' Had the spirit of the times continued to make concessions, concessions would have been constantly made to it. But now, since every concession only renders it more importunate, those who are not ready to give up everything, will more and more resist, and demand back again what they have already yielded. They began by giving up the first chapter in Genesis as mythological, which even well-meaning theologians, as Seiler and Muntinghe, thought of little consequence. Soon, for the supposed greater honour of the New Testament, they gave up the whole Old Testament his-

\* Conclusion of his Hegelingen.

tory as mythological. Scarcely was this point reached, when they felt themselves under the necessity of giving up the first chapters of Matthew and Luke, with the sincere assurance that these scruples about the early history of Jesus did not at all endanger the remaining portions of his life. Soon, however, besides the beginning, they gave up the end, the account of the ascension of Christ, as fabulous. Even here there was no rest. It was not long before the first three Gospels were yielded to the enemy. They then retired on the Gospel of John, and loudly boasted that there they were safe, not without some secret misgivings, however, that they lived only by the forbearance of the foe. He has already appeared, and availed himself of the same weapons which had already gained so many victories, and the Gospel of John is now no better off than the rest. Now, at last, a stand must be taken; a choice must be made; either men must give up everything, or they must ascend to the point whence they first set out, and through the very same stations through which they descended. To this they will not be able, at once, to make up their minds; they will at first believe that they can escape at a cheaper rate; but let them twist and turn as they may, let them use what arts they please, the matter can have no other issue.\* This has a special reference to the state of opinion in Germany. But it is not without its application to us. There are those in our country, even among the orthodox, who talk of a mythology of the Hebrews, and others among the Unitarians, who give up not only the miracles of the Old Testament, but those of the New. All such must either go on or go back. Professor Norton cannot give up the first chapters of Matthew as fabulous, and call him an infidel who gives up the remainder. This new philosophy will break up the old divisions. It will carry some on to Atheism, and drive others back to the un mutilated Bible.

This is not the only effect which this new leaven may be expected to produce. As in Germany it has operated to the destruction of Rationalism, so here it may serve to bring Socinianism and Taylorism into contempt. Even some Unitarian ministers at Boston, we are told, have already discovered that "the religion of the day seemed too cold, too lifeless, too mechanical, for many of their flock."† "There are many, I doubt not," says this same authority, "who will welcome its principles (i. e., the principles 'of the leading school in modern German theology') as soon as they are understood, as the vital, profound, and ennobling theology, which they have earnestly sought for, but hitherto sought in vain."‡ If

\* Kirchen-Zeitung, January, 1836. We commend the above passage to the special consideration of Professor Norton.

† Letter to Mr. Norton, p. 12.

‡ Ibid., p. 149. The above passage must not be understood as referring to the principles of the school described in the preceding pages. The Alumnus seems to think that the little set of Schleiermacher's pupils constitute the leading school in Germany. In this, we think, he is greatly mistaken; but we do not wish to be understood to represent him as endorsing the doctrines of the Hegelians. He says he is no Pantheist, though he thinks Pantheism very religious.



this is so, then farewell to Socinianism, and farewell to Taylorism. If only for consistency's sake, those who, with this Alumnus, find in the transcendentalism of Schleiermacher the true philosophy, must feel or affect the contempt which he felt for the Rationalists and Pelagians. The ground on which they stand, however, is too narrow to afford them a footing. Schleiermacher gave up almost everything, except the incarnation of God in Christ. This was the centre of his system. Those whom he brought off from Rationalism, have almost all gone on, with the Hegelians, to Atheism, or turned back to the Bible. And so it will be here. Indeed, the man who can see no harm in Pantheism, who thinks it a most religious system, and venerates its advocates, as is the case with this Alumnus, has but one step to take, and he is himself in the abyss. We should not, therefore, be surprised to see, in the providence of God, this new philosophy, which is in itself infinitely worse than Socinianism or Deism, made the means of breaking up those deadening forms of error, and while it leads many to destruction, of driving others back to the fountain of life.

Though, for the reasons stated above, we think it not unlikely that this system will make a certain degree of progress in our country, we have no fear of its ever prevailing either here or in England, as it does in Germany. Apart from the power of true religion, which is our only real safeguard against the most extravagant forms of error, there are two obstacles to the prevalence of these doctrines among Englishmen or their descendants. They do not suit our national character. A sanity of intellect, an incapacity to see wonders in nonsense, is the leading trait of the English mind. The Germans can believe anything. Animal magnetism is for them as one of the exact sciences. What suits the Germans, therefore, does not suit us. Hence almost all those who, in England or in this country, have professed transcendentalism, have made themselves ridiculous. If it were not for its exorbitant profaneness, what could be more ludicrous than Mr. Emerson's Address? He tells us that religious sentiment is myrrh, and storax, and chlorine, and rosemary; that the time is coming when the law of gravitation and purity of heart will be seen to be identical, that man has an infinite soul, &c. It will not do. Such men were never made for transcendentalists. This is not meant in disparagement of those gentlemen. It is a real compliment to them, though not exactly to their wisdom. Coleridge is the only Englishman whom we know anything about, who took the system naturally. To him it was truth; he was a mystic; he had faith in what he said, for his words were to him the symbols of his own thoughts. It is not so with others. They repeat a difficult lesson by rote, striving hard all the while not to forget.

It is not, however, only or chiefly on this want of adaptation of the German mysticism to the sane English mind, that we would rely to counteract the new philosophy; it is the influence of the Bible on all our modes of thinking. We believe in God the Father,

the maker of heaven and earth. We must have a God who can hear prayer. In Germany, the educated classes, little in the habit of attending church, have for generations felt comparatively little of the power of the Bible. There was no settled idea of a personal God, such as is visible in every page of the scriptures, engraven on their hearts. They were, therefore, prepared for speculations which destroyed his very nature, and were content with a blind instinctive power, productive of all changes, and struggling at last into intelligence in the human race. Such a God may do for a people who have been first steeped in infidelity for generations; but not for those who have been taught, with their first lisps, to say, Our Father who art in heaven. The grand danger is, that this deadly poison will be introduced under false labels; that this Atheism, enveloped in the scarcely intelligible formulas of the new philosophy, may be regarded as profound wisdom, and thus pass from mouth to mouth without being understood, until it becomes familiar and accredited. We feel it to be a solemn duty to warn our readers, and in our measure, the public, against this German Atheism, which the spirit of darkness is employing ministers of the Gospel to smuggle in among us under false pretences. No one will deny that the Hegelian doctrines, as exhibited above, are Atheism in its worst form; and all who will read the works of Cousin may soon satisfy themselves that his system, as far as he has a system, is, as to the main point, identical with that of Hegel.

## ESSAY XXIII.

### ON CAUSE AND EFFECT.\*

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THE late Dr. Brown, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, some years ago, published a book entitled "Cause and Effect," in which he revived and defended the opinion of Mr. Hume, on the subject of *power*. It is due, however, to the ingenious author, to state that he distinctly disavowed Hume's sceptical inferences from this doctrine.

The same opinions, and the same reasonings in support of them, are exhibited in his lectures on the philosophy of the mind, a more recent publication. And as the philosophy of Dr. Brown has many admirers in this country, and has received unqualified recommendations from high authority, it will not, we trust, appear unreasonable or unnecessary, even at this late period, to bring his theory to the test of a fair examination; this is the object of the present article.

The opinion of Dr. B., to which we have referred, is, that in philosophical accuracy there is no such thing as causation or power; that immediate invariable antecedence is all that properly enters into the idea of a cause, and immediate invariable consequence the true idea of effect; and, accordingly, that power is nothing else but the relation between an immediate invariable antecedent and consequent. In plain English, his opinion is that there is no such thing in nature as power: and that when we mean anything more by this word, than merely to express the invariable antecedence of one thing to another, we speak inaccurately and unphilosophically. The words cause, causation, power, energy, efficacy, &c., express nothing, according to his theory, that is intelligible, besides the mere relation of antecedence and sequence.

It is admitted, however, by Dr. B. that almost the whole human race have annexed to these terms, or those which correspond with them in their respective languages, ideas different from what he considers correct. The structure of all languages furnishes irrefragable proof of this fact. The notion of action, causation, energy, &c., is so common among men, that children and savages entertain it as familiarly as any others. It is an idea which is contained in every active verb, and no man can divest himself of

\* Published in 1829.



it or speak half a dozen sentences without using words which plainly convey this meaning. This fact is so manifest, that the ingenious author does not call it in question. He admits that the opinion which he maintains is contrary "to the almost universal sense of mankind." Now such a general consent is commonly, and we think justly, considered as a strong proof that the idea or sentiment, in which men so agree, is founded in nature, and accordant with truth. It must be strong reasoning, indeed, which shall demonstrate that an opinion entertained by men of all nations, however different in language, in manners, in education, in government, and religion, is false. If this could be done, then all difference between truth and prejudice would be obliterated. To establish the certainty of the existence of power or causation, the argument derived from universal consent appears to us to be irresistible; for we cannot suppose that all men of all nations, from early childhood to hoary age, could be led to adopt an opinion which had no foundation, without admitting the absurd consequence, that all men are so constituted that they are by necessity led to embrace error instead of truth. And this supposition would not answer the purpose of Dr. Brown, as it would render it impossible for him to establish any opinion as true; for that constitution of human nature which leads men invariably astray, in one case, ought to be suspected in all. The true principles of philosophizing should have led to a directly opposite course of reasoning. He should have assumed the fact, that all men possessed of reason entertain from their earliest years the opinion that there is such a thing as power or causation; and this idea being incorporated inseparably with every language in the world, it is a just conclusion that this is one of those common notices, or self-evident truths, which, from the very constitution of our nature, we are under the necessity of receiving. Let any man attempt to form a language from which all idea of active energy or causation shall be excluded, and he will soon find that this is no vulgar prejudice, but a fundamental truth; an idea, which, if it were removed from the human mind, would leave a vast chasm in all our reasonings and systems of truth, in every branch of science. If a people should ever be discovered who used a language which did not involve, in every sentence, the conception of power and causation, this single fact would go further to prove them to be of another species, than all the diversities which have hitherto been observed among the nations of the earth.

But let us see how Dr. B. disposes of this acknowledged fact, of the almost universal existence of the idea of power. He attempts to show that there are analogous cases in which prejudices have, for a long time, had an almost universal prevalence. The instance which he adduces, and to which he often recurs, is the notion of a certain something existing with all bodies, which the schoolmen, after Aristotle, called form, or substantial forms. This notion, it may be admitted, was as extensive, and existed as long, as the Aristotelian logic prevailed. But the case is nowise parallel to

the one under consideration. The opinion respecting substantial forms belonged to a peculiar system of philosophy, and as long as that system maintained its ground would, of course, be entertained; but it was never the opinion of the great body of the people. The mass of mankind never heard of such an opinion; and even in those countries where it was held, it was merely the opinion of the learned. The common people, then, knew as little and believed as little about substantial forms as they do now. The idea is not incorporated, as is the case in regard to power, with all languages. It is not common to children and adults, savages and philosophers. The case adduced, therefore, does not serve to account for the fact of the universal consent of mankind in receiving this opinion. But it is time to attend to the proofs which Dr. B. offers in support of his theory; and that we may do no injustice to his meaning, we will give them in his own words:—The first is, “That we have, in fact, no other idea in our mind, when we speak of cause and effect, than an invariable antecedence and consequence.” “Thus, when a spark falls on gunpowder and kindles it into exposure, every one ascribes to the spark the power of enkindling the inflammables. But let any one ask himself what it is which he means by the term, and without contenting himself with a few phrases which signify nothing,—reflect before he gives his answer, and he will find that he means nothing more than this, in all similar circumstances the explosion of gunpowder will be the immediate consequence of the application of a spark. To take an example more immediately connected with our own science, we all know that as soon as any one in the usual circumstances of health and freedom wills to move his arm the motion of his arm follows, and we believe that in the same circumstances of health and freedom, the motion of the arm will constantly follow the will to move it. If we knew and believed nothing more than that the motion of the arm would uniformly follow the will to move it, would our knowledge of the phenomenon be less perfect?” “Let us suppose ourselves then to know all the antecedents and consequents in nature, and to believe, not merely that they have once or repeatedly existed in connexion, but that they have uniformly done so, and will continue for ever to recur in a similar series; so that but for the intervention of the divine will (which would be itself, in that case, a new antecedent), it will be impossible for any of the antecedents to exist again without being immediately followed by its original consequent.”

Again: “To him who had previously kindled a fire, and placed on it a vessel full of water, with a certainty that in that situation the water would speedily become hot, what additional information would be given by telling him that the fire had the power of boiling water?” “It is only by confounding casual with uniform and invariable antecedence, that power can be conceived to be something different from antecedence.” “Such is the simple and, as it appears to me, only intelligible view of power, as discovera-

ble in the successive phenomena of nature, and how very different from this simple view is the common, or, I may almost say, the universal notion of the agencies which are supposed to be concerned in the phenomena which are the objects of philosophical inquiry." "To me it appears indeed so obvious a truth, that the substances which exist in nature—the world, its living inhabitants and their adorable Creator, are all the real existences in nature, and that in the various changes which occur, there can as little be any powers or susceptibilities different from the antecedents and consequences themselves, as there can be forms differing from the co-existing particles of matter which constitute them."

The author feeling, however, that it was incumbent on him to account more fully for the fallacy which he supposes to exist almost universally in regard to the nature of a cause, attributes it to "abstraction aided and perpetuated by the use of language." But the principal cause to which he ascribes this universal prejudice is, "the imperfection of the senses." "We are frequently," he observes, "incapable of perceiving the immediate antecedent to a consequent, and are, therefore, in danger of connecting it with a wrong antecedent; by this means we are led to inquire after the true causes of things, that is, after their real and immediate antecedents." "As our senses are at present constituted, they are too imperfect to enable us to distinguish all the elements that co-exist in bodies; and of elements which are themselves unknown to us, the minute changes which take place in them must of course be unknown." "And since it is only between immediate antecedents and consequents that we suppose any permanent and invariable relation, we are, therefore, constantly on the watch to detect in the more obvious changes that appear to us in nature some of those minuter elementary changes which we suspect to intervene." "He who for the first time listens to the delightful sound of a violin, if he be ignorant of the theory of sound, will very naturally suppose that the touch of the strings by the bow is the cause of the melody which he hears. He learns, however, that this primary impulse would be of little effect were it not for the vibrations excited by the violin itself; and another discovery still more important shows him that the vibration of the instrument would be of no effect were it not for the elastic medium interposed between his ear and it. It is no longer to the violin, therefore, that he looks as the direct cause of the sensation of sound, but to the vibrating air; nor will even this be long considered as the cause, if he turns his attention to the structure of the organ of hearing. He will then trace effect after effect, through a long series of complex and very wonderful parts, till he arrives at the auditory nerve, and the whole mass of the brain." "The expectation of discovering something intermediate and unknown between all known events is easily convertible into the common notion of power, as a secret and invisible tie."

In the conclusion of his lecture on Cause and Effect, Dr. B.



inquires how this notion will correspond with our idea of the efficiency of the great Creator, in the production of the universe ; and seems to find no difficulty here. The divine will, he makes the grand antecedent of those glorious effects which the universe displays. " The power of God is not anything different from God ; but is the Almighty himself willing whatever seems to him good."

" We do not see any third circumstance existing intermediately and binding, as it were, the will of the omnipotent Creator to the things which are to be ; we conceive only the divine will itself, as if made visible to our imagination, and all nature at the very moment rising around. It is evident, that in the case of the divine agency, as well as in every other instance of causation, the introduction of any other circumstance as a bond of closer connexion, would only furnish a new phenomenon to be itself connected." " God speaks and it is done ; we imagine nothing intermediate."

Thus, we have endeavoured to present a fair view of Dr. Brown's theory, and with the explanations and reasons by which he endeavours to support it. We shall now make some remarks on the several particulars which have been brought into view, intended to show the unreasonableness and dangerous tendency of his doctrine.

1. It will be admitted that Dr. Brown has been successful in proving, by an elaborate analysis, in his treatise on Cause and Effect, that we have no direct conceptions of anything else but the antecedents and consequents, in those series of events which take place within us, or without us. It is true, that in no case we are able to form any distinct conception of the operation of any cause ; we see the antecedent, and we see the consequent, but how the latter is effected by the former we perceive not. If Dr. Brown had contented himself with drawing the conclusion (which is the only one that, from the premises, he had a right to draw), that we are capable of forming no distinct idea of the nature of causation, we should have acquiesced in his reasoning. But, are there not many things which we certainly know to exist, of which our ideas are merely relative ? This is true of every substance. We can form a direct conception only of the properties, not of the substance itself. We are, nevertheless, led by the constitution of our nature to believe that there is a subject, or substratum, in which these properties inhere, and to which they belong. The same may be observed respecting dispositions or principles of action. Now, our persuasion, that there is such a thing as causation, is as uniform and as irresistible as the belief of material and immaterial substances. It is one of the clearest and most universally experienced convictions of the human understanding. We see an effect, and immediately we believe that some sort of energy has been excited in its production. A million of men will all have the same feeling—there must be a cause. But Dr. Brown asserts that this idea of efficiency or energy is a mere illusion, and that it is not necessary to assign any other cause, than merely to ascertain what circum-

stance invariably precedes the event. Which shall we believe to be correct, the million or the one ?

2. There seems to be some inconsistency in Dr. Brown's statement of the facts connected with this subject. On the one hand he admits that the common opinion, indeed, the almost universal opinion of men, is different from what he believes to be the true philosophical opinion ; and yet, he seems to say, that if we would carefully attend to the conception which we have of power, we should find that it includes nothing but simple antecedence. "Let any one," says he in a passage already quoted, "ask himself what it is which he means by the term, and he will find that he means nothing more than that, in all similar circumstances, the explosion of gunpowder will be the immediate and uniform consequence of the application of a spark." From this it should seem, that after all, the ideas of men respecting power are not so erroneous as has been represented ; that when they think of a cause, they do, in fact, think of nothing but an invariable immediate antecedent. If this is correct, we cannot but think that the laborious investigation of the author was useless. But how, in consistence with this, can it be maintained that men are almost universally in a fallacy on this point ? Indeed, if the theory of Dr. B. is correct, it will be found extremely difficult to account for the origin of the notion of power or agency. How such a conception should enter the mind of man is incomprehensible.

3. Dr. Brown attributes this illusion of men to "abstraction, aided and perpetuated by the use of language, and the unavoidable modes of grammatical construction." But how abstraction should be the cause of error in men who are very little in the habit of forming abstract ideas, and how it should produce a uniformly erroneous effect in men of every nation and condition, is a problem not easily solved. Neither is it manifest how this error could be "aided and perpetuated by the use of language, and the unavoidable modes of grammatical construction." Language receives its structure and its forms from ideas already existing, and from the modes of thinking which are common to all men, or peculiar to some one nation. It is certainly no very natural process to adopt such modes of speech as have no modes of thought corresponding with them ; and then, to suppose that these modes of speech should generate the ideas which they represent. What the ingenious author advances in illustration of his opinions on this point, is far from possessing that clearness and precision which usually attend him, in his attempts at elucidating an obscure subject.

4. But the principal reason assigned by Dr. Brown for the general illusion on the subject of cause and effect, is "the imperfection of our senses." How the ingenious author applies this to the subject, we have already seen. But it amounts to no more than this, that from our ignorance of the true nature of things we are often led to ascribe effects to the wrong causes, and knowing our liableness to error on this ground, when two things appear

related, as cause and effect, or as an immediate antecedent and consequent, we suspect that they are not so related, but that there is still something not discovered, which is intermediate, and thus, by searching for these invisible, intermediate links in the concatenation of events, we come, by association, to imagine a mysterious connexion between the antecedents and consequents; that is, we come at length to suppose that one thing exerts an efficacy to produce what follows. The analysis of the process of the mind in seeking after the true causes of phenomena, given by the author, may be admitted; but it casts no light on the main point in question. As to the principle so universally received, that there must be a cause for every effect, it has no dependence on our knowledge of the true cause. Our conviction is equally firm, that there must be an exertion of power, where an effect is produced, when we see no cause, as when we certainly know what it is. We may believe that, in most cases, we are ignorant of the real efficient causes of events; or we may be in doubt, of a number of apparent causes, which is the real one; but this has no effect on our conviction, that there is a real efficient cause somewhere. Philosophers may dispute whether the effects, apparently produced by the agency of material causes, are not rather to be attributed to some spiritual agency, either of the first cause, operating through all nature, or of subordinate agents under his control; but they all agree that these effects must have an adequate cause. When I will to move my arm, it may be disputed whether the effect is produced by my volition, or by some other cause acting harmoniously with my will, but it can never be disputed that the motion of my arm has a real, efficient cause, whatever it may be. So when I observe that my thoughts follow each other in a certain order, and that thoughts of a certain kind are invariably followed by certain other thoughts, it may be matter of dispute whether the antecedent thought or desire is the real cause of that which follows. The affirmative, however probable, is not capable of demonstration; for it is possible that this effect may be produced by some superior and invisible agent. But while, in all these cases, we may doubt about the real cause, even when we are certain of the immediate and invariable antecedent of one thing to another, yet we never doubt whether there does not exist a cause of the effect produced. This conviction is one which attends us everywhere, and of which we can no more divest ourselves than of the consciousness of existence. It is one of those intuitive, self-evident truths, which cannot be rendered clearer or more certain by any reasoning. In fact, all reasoning is built upon it, as on its most solid foundation; and if it were possible to dislodge it from the minds of men (which it is not), all reasoning and all human exertions would cease.

5. But not to rest merely on the defensive, we would next remark that immediate, invariable antecedence does not, in many cases, give us the idea of a cause. There are innumerable in-



stances of immediate invariable antecedence, in which we never think of ascribing causation to the antecedents. From the moment of our birth, the pulsations of the heart succeed each other immediately and invariably, but we do not, therefore, consider one pulsation as the true cause of the next succeeding one. One portion of duration immediately and invariably succeeds another, but who ever thought that one moment was the cause of the one following? When the electricity of the clouds strikes an object, light is uniformly emitted, but we do not consider light to be the cause of the effects produced. We are accustomed to distinguish between a sign and cause, although the former may be as immediate and invariable as the latter.

6. According to Dr. Brown's theory, there is no need that there should be any proportion between the cause and effect; for if antecedence be all that is included in the idea of a cause, it is evident that the most important event may be conceived to have, as its antecedent, the most trivial thing in the universe. Thus the song of the sky-lark, if it only had immediate, invariable antecedence, might be the cause of the rising of the sun; and the chirping of the sparrow, of the revolution of the planets.

7. Again, upon this theory, all reasoning from the nature of an effect to the character of the cause, and from the nature of the cause to the character of the effect, must be vain. For it matters not what be the nature of the cause or effect, provided only there be immediate invariable antecedence and consequence.

All arguments, therefore, for the existence of an intelligent first cause, derived from a consideration of the appearances of design in the universe, must, on this theory, be perfectly futile. All we want, to account for anything, however great, or good, or wise, is, that something, it matters not what, should precede it immediately, and invariably. Indeed, we see not why nothing may not, upon these principles, be the cause of all things, as well as a self-existent Deity; for as there is no efficiency or energy in a cause, all the requisites of the most potent cause may be found in nothing, as well as in something which has real existence. It is due to the ingenious author to say, that he appears to entertain exalted conceptions of the great Creator, and rejects every idea of Atheism. This, however, does not alter the nature and tendency of his theory, which must be judged on its own merits. When the author speaks, as we have seen he does, of all things springing into existence from the mere will of God, the sentiment is just and noble; but in this case we do not exclude the idea of energy, power, and efficiency; we conceive that God is so perfect that the mere act of his will includes in it all energy. It is the supreme efficiency. But if you view it merely as an antecedent, anything else conceivable might be the cause of all things as well. Why must the divine will be the antecedent to the existence of the universe, if there be no efficiency—if there be no such thing as real causation?

8. When the ingenious author makes the whole of a cause, in

every case, to consist in immediate and invariable antecedence, it seems that all idea of contact, contiguity in place, or the immediate presence of the antecedent with the consequent, is excluded. Connexion in time seems to be the only thing necessary, according to this theory. Therefore, the causes of events may be at an infinite distance. If an occurrence in the planet Saturn should uniformly precede an event on this earth, it would therefore be its cause.

9. But again, an effect may have more invariable antecedents than one; and which then is the true cause? According to the theory under consideration, both. Thus we may have many causes of the same effect, which would introduce perfect confusion into every department of philosophy.

10. It does not appear, according to the theory under consideration, what we are to think of those things which occur very often, as antecedents and consequents, and yet not invariably; or rather it does not appear, why these do not partake, in proportion to their frequency of connexion, of the nature of cause and effect. Suppose one thing to precede another nine hundred and ninety-nine times, and then fail once, and so on, why is this antecedence to be excluded entirely from the class of causes? We see no good reason for it. Indeed, it is not made evident by the author, why the succession must be invariable, to constitute a cause. As antecedence in time is the whole idea of power, it would seem to be more reasonable to consider everything a cause when it happened to precede another, whether its antecedence were invariable or casual.

11. Moreover, if invariable attendance is necessary to constitute a cause, then those effects which occur but once have no cause; and all effects, when they first existed, were without cause; or must have been so considered by an intelligent spectator. For although he might observe that something immediately preceded the effect, it could not be known whether the connexion between the antecedent and consequent was casual or invariable. And it is the confounding these two things, to which Dr. Brown attributes a great part of our errors on this subject. Indeed, if invariable as well as immediate antecedence be necessary to the idea of a cause, it is manifest that long experience was requisite, before men could judge anything respecting cause and effect. And after all, our observation is confined within so narrow bounds, that we are little capable of determining whether the connexion of things which we see in any case is absolutely invariable. And what judgment could we form, on these principles, of a miraculous event? For in this, the effect is contrary to those which usually follow from such antecedents as we perceive to exist. If a miracle can occur on Dr. Brown's principles, can it be of use to establish any doctrine? Suppose a manifest miracle to occur before our eyes; the question will be, to what cause must it be attributed? According to the old doctrine of cause and effect, the answer is, to the power of God, because nothing else can produce such a work. But if there

be no such thing as power, we can draw no such inference. As it has no invariable antecedent, it can have no cause; or as mere antecedence is the only idea of a cause, it may have been produced by any cause, it matters not what, provided only it preceded the miracle. And we come to the same conclusion, if an inquiry be made respecting the cause of the existence of the world. The event being single it could have no invariable antecedent; but supposing, as Dr. Brown evidently does, that there are some cases in which mere antecedence is all that is necessary in a cause, the other consequence presses upon us, that any preceding thing, or even nothing, as was shown before, may be the cause of the universe. It is in vain that the philosopher talks sublimely of the will of God being the antecedent, for it is impossible for him to demonstrate upon his principles, that any such antecedent is necessary to the existence of the universe. For if he should insist that no other antecedent is adequate to such a work of magnificence, he immediately abandons his main and favourite principle, viz., that mere antecedence is cause, and mere consequence effect. If the wisdom and will of God, as the author everywhere admits, are necessary, as the antecedent or cause of the universe, then there must be something in a cause besides mere immediate invariable antecedence. There must be something in the cause proportioned to the effect produced. In short, where marks of intelligence are manifest in the effect, there must be wisdom as well as power in the cause. And this brings us back to the old common-sense doctrine of cause and effect, in departing from which there is nothing to be gained but much to be lost.

12. Finally, if power be nothing, and causation be mere antecedence, we do not perceive how we shall be able to maintain the accountableness of man, or any other moral agent, for his actions. According to his theory, all actions are separate, independent events, which have no relation whatever to one another, except that of antecedence and consequence. We do not see, therefore, on what point we can fix man's responsibility. If we, this moment, have a will to do a good action the next moment, and if that good action should follow invariably this volition, still, according to the theory, the volition had no influence in the production of the consequent good action. They are both links in a chain which cannot be broken; or rather fixed points in a succession, which have no other dependence on one another, or relation to each other, than this, that in the succession, certain points stand next in order to certain other points. Thus necessity, in its most forbidding form, is established; and human power, liberty, and responsibility, are subverted. We know, indeed, that Dr. Brown and his followers do not admit these to be legitimate inferences from their doctrine, and of course we do not charge such opinions upon them. But as they appear to us to be just deductions, it is fair to bring them forward as arguments against a system, which appears to us fraught with danger to sound philosophy. Nothing has tended



so much to bring mental philosophy into disrepute, as the paradoxical and extravagant opinions of some ingenious men, who in their reasonings have too much lost sight of first principles, and have trusted too much to abstruse speculations. In no science are sobriety of mind and soundness of judgment more requisite, than in the philosophy of the mind.

It is a pleasing reflection, that such is our constitution, that opinions subversive of the first principles of truth can never prevail to any great extent. Our safety from errors of the most enormous kind consists in the impossibility of adopting them. Men may, indeed, by pursuing a course of intricate and sophistical reasoning, come to conclusions, which are repugnant to those truths which are primary and self-evident; and while the mind is intent on its own reasoning, there may be an assent to these absurd conclusions; and in writing, and discourse, they may be defended with much pertinacity and ingenuity, but in common life, where philosophical principles are lost sight of, the sceptic thinks, and believes, and acts like other men. To common people, who are guided entirely by plain, evident truth, these sceptical opinions of philosophers always appear not only paradoxical, but nonsensical, and they feel no inclination to adopt them; so that there is no danger of their spreading very extensively. But false opinions of this sort are nevertheless attended with much injury. Young men, who have learned that many opinions which they acquired in the nursery, or in their narrow domestic circle, are mere prejudices of education, are prone to suspect everything which they have been taught, and have been accustomed to receive as true. When we perceive that many notions which were long considered undoubted truths, are proved by the light of philosophy to be altogether unfounded, we naturally incline to be sceptical about everything. And this is not all. When the darkness of ignorance and prejudice begins to be scattered by the increasing lights of science and philosophy, pride of learning is apt to spring up; and a desire to appear superior to the vulgar leads many to embrace and cherish opinions which differ widely from the common belief. Because, in some things, they have seen that vulgar opinions are false, they too hastily conclude that the more any opinion differs from that commonly received, the more certain it is; and by professing it, that their superior wisdom is rendered more manifest. Now, the theories of ingenious sceptical philosophers find in such minds a soil in which they readily take root. Thus, Hume by his metaphysical subtleties, the tendency of which is often to render all things uncertain, has bewildered and perverted the minds of many aspiring youth. And although we would by no means put Dr. Brown in the same class as Mr. Hume, for he appears always ingenuous, and friendly to religion, yet we think it is manifest that he had been too conversant with Hume's philosophy. He was probably carried away, before his judgment was mature, with admiration of the writings of this fascinating sceptic. And while his good principles led him

to reject Hume's atheistical opinions, he endeavoured to retain and support some of the most dangerous of his philosophical theories.

What will be the effect of the publication of Dr. Brown's philosophy, in this country, it is not easy to foretell. Attention to this department of science is yet confined to a comparatively small number, even of our reading population. But the taste for metaphysical inquiries is increasing, and no writer is likely to attract more readers than Dr. Brown, as he contrives, by the peculiar buoyancy of his mind, and by the elegance and frequency of his classical allusions, to spread a charm over a subject, commonly considered the least capable of being rendered amusing. There is also so much that is original and accurate, in his Lectures; there are so much distinct and perspicuous analysis, and so much elegant description, and so much superiority to the authority and influence of former systems, and of great names, that it is much to be regretted, that in a few points of fundamental importance he has adopted and inculcated opinions so absurd and dangerous. That his theories have, in some instances, operated unfavourably on young men of ardent minds, we know to be a fact: but in our opinion, the right way to prevent the bad consequences of such books, is not to prohibit the reading of them, but to answer them, and to lead young men to peruse them with caution, and at the proper time.

THE END.













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